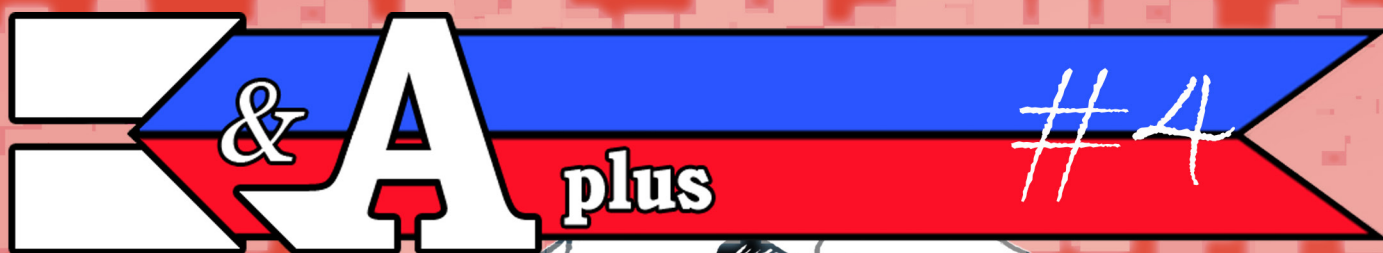


Komoda & Amiga plus - Commodore computers user's magazine



Winter / Spring 2016

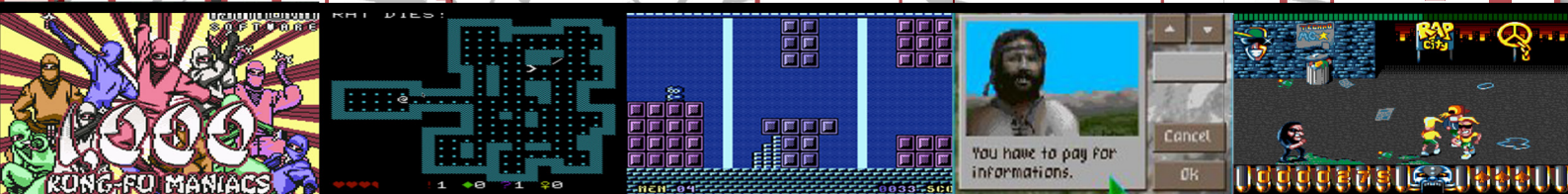
English Edition

**RULES OF DEMOSCENE
RETRO GAMING NOSTALGIA**

**SLAVIA 2
KUNG-FU MANIACS TRILOGY
25 YEARS OF LEMMINGS**

**INTERVIEWS:
JAMMER**

TANKS FURRY: KOYOTI222 & JUAN



JAN LOREK

#4 *just arrived!*

Oh dear! As our friend Ramos used to say, time flies so fast... Not that long ago we celebrated releasing first issue of K&A plus and we're already at issue 4. You may have noticed from our cover art that the main feature this issue is going to be the medieval game Slavia 2. Game's author, and editorial pal Minimoog, put a lot of effort into the second release of this game and I'm happy to announce that we've included C64 image of Slavia 2 on our coverdisk. The initial version of Slavia was previously included on a coverdisk attached to the 9th issue of our discontinued magazine Komoda.

Interesting fact about the cover art. Our friend Jan Lorek retrieved the sketch of Mieszko I of Poland – a historical ruler of the Polans. We were looking for some historical artwork to highlight the medieval character of Slavia 2 and found it perfectly matched our needs for this issue of KA plus!

More content worth checking out is an interview with the Project R3D team: Paweł Nowak (Juen) and Krzysztof Matys (Koyot 1222), who developed and published Tanks Furry. A fresh, cool Amiga tank-themed game. We delve into how the group formed, what inspires them, and what the future holds. This interesting interview was prepared by Tomxx.

We'd also love your opinion on a new column that would be heavily dependent on our readers. We're looking at reviving the TOP games section, which could be separated into various platform categories. This would include lists for the Amiga, C64, C16/116/Plus 4 and VIC-20. To make it happen we'd obviously need your votes. Let us know if you'd be willing to participate, as in order for this to make sense we'd need to receive a large amount of votes for each issue of the magazine. Let us know on our e-mail address: team@ka-plus.pl or through the K&A Plus Facebook page.

Finally, we're very happy seeing a growing group of readers. We're getting more and more e-mails, which only proves that the fun we get from creating the magazine is matched by your enthusiasm.

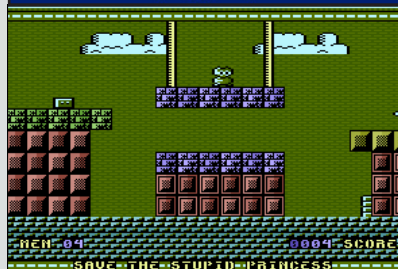
A bevy of cool retro content awaits – happy reading!

Komek & Editorial crew

If you have strong English language skills or are a native English speaker, we'd like to invite you to cooperate with our magazine. We're looking for people who can help us write and translate the articles into the English version of K&A plus. Let us know if you're interested via team@ka-plus.pl or through our K&A plus Facebook page. It'd be cool to get more retro-maniacs into the team!

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winter/spring 2016



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COVERDISK



Komoda & Amiga plus

Commodore computers' user's magazine

Editor-in-chief: Komek

Editors: Ramos, noctropolis, Bobikowoz, Tomxx, Minimoog, MrMat, Don Rafito, c00k, JargoV, GeoAnas, Neurocide, Arteus, Petrichor, Uka

WWW: <http://ka-plus.pl> E-Mail: team@ka-plus.pl

Design and DTP: Tomxx, MrMat

Drawings: Johnny

Cover design and concept art: Ruben Messeguer

Proofreading: Komek, Minimoog, noctropolis, Tomxx, MrMat

Translations: Slayerpl, Bobikowoz, Tomxx, Karo, Petrichor, Michał Sroka, Tomasz Kubisztal, MA, Arteus, GeoAnas

Cooperation: Paweł Król, Agat, Michał Sroka, Górka, Hery, Jacyz

Fresh News

C64

JANI

Oliver Orosz, 2016



The New Year starts with a SEUCK game created by Olivier Orosz, a Hungarian graphician. My first thoughts after rushing to load and run "JANI" brought back memories from the NES version of the game "The Legend of Zelda". Very good graphics, pretty good playability and a moderate level of difficulty make the JANI an interesting title to play. In my opinion, it is one among all the top SEUCK productions that have recently arisen.

■ Komek

C64

JANI 2

Oliver Orosz, 2016



Well, well! We have not even had the time to publish the fourth issue of "K&A plus" and Oliver has already released the second part of the game "JANI". Great graphics and game play, as good as in the first part. This game can really compete on equal terms with other commercial games from the same gender. This product clearly proves that SEUCK games can indeed be really interesting and attractive. You will find more info about this game later in this issue.

■ Komek

C64

PETACO'5

Errazking, 2016



I admit that I am not a particular pinball fan, but from time to time I also enjoy playing this kind of games. "Petaco'5" is a C64 pinball that offers quite wide level of fun. This is a game that suits all kind of players and is not just for the – hardcore – bouncing "ball" fans. Graphically speaking don't expect any major fireworks, but it is still ok. Its score music is – in one word – magnificent! Seven great songs of Richard Bayliss are included there. This game is certainly worth your attention.

■ Komek

C64

LITTLE KNIGHT ARTHUR

PasiHytönen, 1986



The date of the year mentioned above is perfectly correct – the game *Little Knight Arthur* was written 30 years ago, but its author decided to release it to the wider audience only this year. As for its age, the game would be pretty good if not a bit too high and steep level of difficulty. Graphical layer is simple, readable and very cheerful, so that despite the continuous defeats player has an irresistible desire to make another attempt to cope with all difficulties in each level. Another clever trap or some annoying opponents are trying to discourage you, but you're not about to easily give up, aren't you?

■ bobikowoz

VIC20

ColorRun RETRO

tokra, 2016



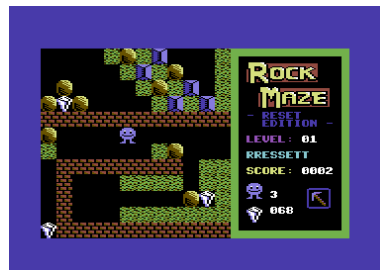
This is a VIC20 version of the browser/mobile game of the same title. Rules are very simple: the screen is divided into two parts and each one has a different shade of color (light or dark). Using your joy-

stick in port A or keyboard (left-right) you have just to pick the lighter color. Action is being repeated over and over again. This should be done as fast as possible, because it has a huge impact on the number of points and the status acquirable when the game is over. Sounds too easy but it isn't at all! And please remember: beware of dark shades! ■ Komek

C64

ROCK MAZE: RESET EDITION

Reset Magazine Staff, 2016



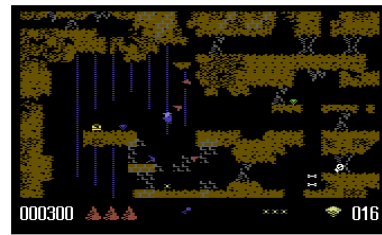
I know that "Boulder Dash" is an undisputed hit of the 80's. There are also some people who still play it today with great pleasure and enthusiasm. It didn't personally hook me up that much though. "Rock Maze" is a "Boulder Dash" variant, which was created some time ago. This particular version was created for "Reset" magazine and released as "Rock Maze: Reset Edition". It features quite nice graphics, simple sound effects and plenty of diamonds to collect. Pure nostalgia dated back to '80s.

■ Komek

C64

THE CATACOMBS OF CHERUBIM

Laxity, 2015



When I first spot the screenshot of this game I realized I have to find out how it works. Because of the tiny player character sprite, I assumed that the maze will be huge and time consuming for sightseeing and treasure hunt. Unfortunately, the game controls dampened my enthusiasm for exploration of the catacombs. The little figure jumps only when you move to the side, and every major fall means death. It might make sense to give the game a second chance because of the attractive graphic design, but my enjoyment was negatively affected by the unusual controls.

■ bobikowoz

C16, C116, Plus/4, C64

HUGOHUNT

Angelsoft, 2016



Warning! We have some good news for all fans of maze games: a new release for all four Commodore platforms (C16, 116, Plus / 4, 64). It is

a port of the original program called "Hugojagd XE" which was created in 1985 by Stefan Dorndorf for Atari XE and XL. Now, thanks to Angelsoft, Commodore users can play it as well. You control a smiley face and the game looks similarly to a Pac Man idea. You are moving in a maze and your goal is to eat small circles and collect all items in the correct order to get to the exit. Generally fun to play.

■ **Komek**

C64

CIVILIZATIONS



If you think you have experienced everything that could have been possibly created on the C64, "Civilizations" can prove you were wrong! DrKhumalo presented a clip of his upcoming game to the Lemon64 forums audience: it is an isometric strategy game that resembles the series of Civilization games commercially released for more powerful computers. This 20-minute footage demonstrates the gameplay, which includes the map itself, the units' movement and their interaction. All main "Civilizations" features are present here: urban economics, technology development, resource management and production. The whole game looks amazing, although the author points out that this is not a preview ver-

sion yet, because the game is still lacking AI, some management options, soundtrack, etc. However, we will keep an eye on the development of this project, as the finalized product certainly has a chance to be a major hit!

■ **Tomxx**

C64

SPACEMAN SPLORF: PLANET OF DOOM

Pond/SDW Developments, 2016



Having enough of "Flappy Bird" clones or not, please do proceed to the rest of this review. Why? This is about an extremely successful clone for C64 computers. This time the action takes place in space where we take on working for an Astro-Engineering corporation. An interesting fact is the quite extensive accompanying game story. The game starts with a really cool, pictorial intro, which is definitely worth watching. It is a very large and impressive game with a wise mixture of audiovisual characteristics. Backgrounds are drawn from a palette of nice colors, well bonded together with a great contrast. There is also a depth illusion on moving at different speeds. Before you start playing, you can also select one of eight tunes, and each of them is composed at a high quality level. Although they differ in style and mood every-

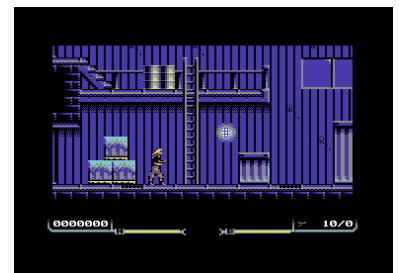
one will find something appropriate. Another alternative is the option to enable SFX. It's even supporting stereo SIDs. The player's control is adequately responsive. The game is really great and I definitely recommend it.

■ **noctropolis**

C64

HESSIAN

CovertBitops, 2016



Hessian, Ladies and Gentlemen, is going to be a real hit! It's an arcade-adventure game developed by Lasse-Oorni'ego (Cadaver) who has previously completed all four games of "Metal Warrior" series. "Hessian" also derives from the rest of the series. You're Kim – a member of the security staff in a scientific research complex – who witnessed something really surprising and terrible. Action includes both shooting (with more powerful weapons progressively discovered on your way) and browsing various rooms and places. You have to acquire items that you will need to gain access to new, initially inaccessible areas. You can talk to people and use the computers. Graphics are nice and crisp with a smooth animation of the main character. Music is atmospheric and bonds nicely with the game. Are they really any disadvantages? In fact, there is only

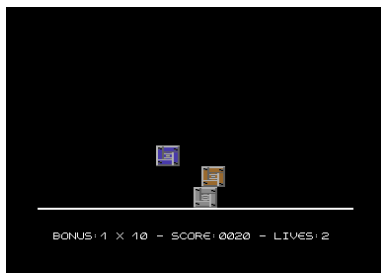
one: a bit too complicated control system. In any case, I feel that this is really smashing and elaborate production, one of the best of all time for C64. It is certainly a rightful candidate for the game of the year award. Is there any other title nearly as good as in this category?

■ noctropolis

C64

STACK (MY BITCH) UP

Delysid, 2016



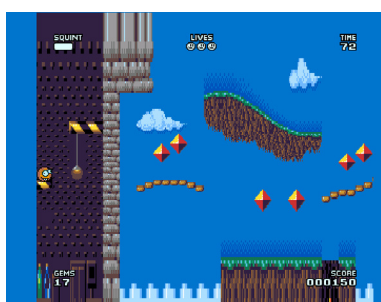
There are a lot of arcade games recently created for C64. Some are superiors to the others. Recently, at German BCC Party #10 hosted at the end of January 2016, a new very cool arcade game has been released: it's called "Stack (My Bitch) up". You have to arrange incoming boxes and place them on top of each other. They must be placed down carefully, although tiny irregularities are also accepted. Overall, it has a strong fun factor, combined with an energetic music.

■ Komek

Amiga

ZEROSPHERE

Code Red, 2015



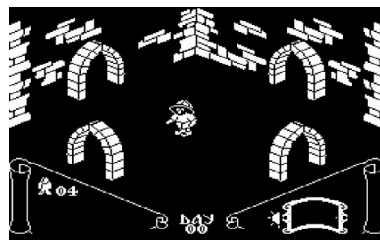
The last months of 2015 brought us a very interesting platformer game, called "Zerosphere", which has already made a loud entry at the beginning of this year. It is obvious that the authors were inspired by such big hits as "Super Frog", "The Great Giana Sisters" and so on... The game character is a yellow, round creature called "Squint". It was drawn by the evil Odak to a Dimensional Transformer, which meant that the world seen by "Squint" sometimes becomes distorted. Help out our hero to collect all the diamonds that are in the area and defeat the evil Odak.

■ Komek

Amiga OS3.1

KNIGHT LORE

Ultimate Play the Game, 1984/2016



Probably most of you recall the game called "Knight Lore" published in 1984 by "Ultimate Play the Game". This developer was quite strong on Spectrum and Amstrad 8-bit home computers and afterwards successfully transitioned into modern dev company. In KL You take the role of a knight who has been bitten by a wolf. Your task is to find a cure for the curse and you have just 40 days to complete the task. Game's graphics and action are drawn in isometric view. During the day, you are wandering around the rooms as a man who turns into a werewolf at nights. This one is a very simple port. Nothing

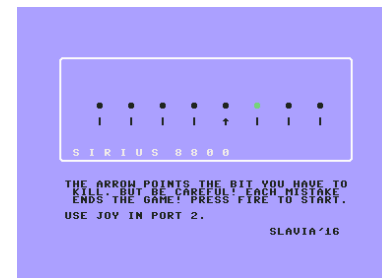
fancy here. Unfortunately, it lacks sound and music, and graphics are so oldschoolish, same as the one you recall from the 8-bit versions. The creator of this port does not have much experience in such cases, but he plans to further develop this project and work on updates. One of his priorities is to improve the graphics. He also made the source code available to the public. Port is available for download at the following link: <http://retroports.blogspot.co.uk/p/blog-page.html>.

■ Petrichor

C64

KILL THE BIT

Slavia, 2016



If you count all the years passed by starting from Tennis for two till now, video games as an entertainment have been started 64 years ago (pretty nice number, isn't it?). Whoever reached deeper in gaming history than the VIC-20, shouldn't feel surprised by the name of Altair 8800. Yes, even then, in the 70s, there were games out there and an example is a simple applet "The Kill Bit" programmed for Altair system. "Slavia" decided to port this title to the C64 and its simplicity allowed us to complete this work in only a few hours. This simple and, for some people, even boring game is available for download at the following link: <http://csdb.dk/release/?id=146382>

■ Minimoog



EDITORIAL

Is Retro Gaming **Nostalgia** Just a Longing for the Times of Youth?

■ Editorial: noctropolis; Translated by Tomxx/Petrichor

Lots of discussions on various topics lead to the general conclusion that "things back then were better". Such statements can, in fact, relate to practically everything - serious sociopolitical topics, aspects of the daily life, its quality and comfort, even trivial, but still relevant attributes of culture, like music, film, press and finally video games. On the other hand, you can almost always expect to hear a counterargument indicating that it's just our own reminiscence for the times of youth. And since youth usually brings up positive memories about our carefree and joyful times, all the discussed points and issues are often associated with deep and very positive impressions.

DOES IT ALSO APPLY TO VIDEO GAMING?

Obviously, this mechanism is also reflected in the discussions related to the broadly defined topics of electronic entertainment. Retro gamers tend to frequently criticize modern products for their secondary character, repetitiveness and general lack of flavor. Similarly, younger player base often accuse retro titles to be one great audiovisual prehistory. And once the older games' supporter argues they are better, more valuable and memorable, the younger gamer responds back with the final assault, that all these feelings are due to the relationship with former's childhood emotions. And what's the truth? It's a difficult question to answer, without further reflection of this topic.

So I thought I'll give myself

an answer to this intriguing question: is my retro gaming nostalgia just a longing for the days of my childhood? Does thinking of old good games, recalling their plots and still greatly enjoying playing them comes down to pure and basic sentiment? Is my conviction about some old titles – and I really think some of them were brilliant, timeless and extremely playable – only triggered by those positive feelings from my early days? In other words, is the previously mentioned mechanism of associating our childhood with positively recalled experience identical in computer games industry? Or is it just a sorrow for something that has gone away forever?

WHAT DO CANARINHOS HAVE TO DO WITH IT?

I'd like to bring up a comparison to football, as it's one of my interests inherited from early days. I wouldn't say I'm

a huge football fanatic that can memorize all teams' names and facts, but I still watch this sport regularly. The first FIFA World Cup (by far the most important event in the world of football) I watched and went crazy about, was played in USA in 1994. I still recall those players, games, scores or even just single tackles, like it all happened yesterday. I also recall France 1998, although these memories aren't that deep. However, all football events that followed in 2002, 2006, 2010 or even two years ago weren't particularly memorable and had no impact on my future life. Sure, they were exciting, but the recollections disappeared shortly after, making room to all sort of current events. Where am I going with it? I want to emphasize that I still recall the event that took place 20 years ago better than the ones watched recently. These five goals scored by Oleg Salenko in a single

match, colorful and crazy Mexican goalkeeper Jorge Campos, deadly Brazilian duo strikers Romario-Bebe-to or missed penalty in the final by Roberto Baggio – all these memories were permanently engraved in the head of an 11-year-old kid who was enchanted by Brazilian national team's magic and absorbed football events like a sponge. Does this mean that back then football stars were stronger, goals more beautiful, accompanying events more spectacular and games incomparably more exciting? Frankly, I don't think so. It's rather due to the fact that I was incomparably more excited, I was analyzing all the games while sitting in front of the TV, taking notes, colorful drawings and writing down statistics. I even tried to replay these great football actions together with some of my other passionate friends. Today, I quickly forget about the games I just watched and instantly move on to other tasks and responsibilities.

Although I referred to football in my opening comparison, this situation can be applied to just about anything. This is similar with music – although I remain largely faithful to one specific genre I get back to my "old" albums much more often than I look for new releases, which I find uninteresting and secondary. Such examples originating from all various

aspects of life can be easily multiplied, so let me stop at this point.

SO, THE YOUTH REALLY MATTERS HERE...

Let's be honest – analogy to video games is clear. We all used to celebrate the moments of sitting in front of our home computer in attempts to load our favorite title. This process became a real ritual! Prior to that, even a visit to the computer store was a ritual, where we used to browse catalogs of, what we called, "mixes" – sets of different games stored on a tape – just to select the most interesting one. Everything was associated with primitively genuine childish fascination to this highly mysterious and fantastic world displayed on TV screen by little beige C64 box. Back then the pure

ability to control a character on the screen was something intriguing; today it's just another ordinary thing that became a norm across the years. Once, many of the beloved games turned into unusual "gateways" to a particular contemporary interest, became specific links connecting us with given topic. For example, as a child I was fascinated with motorcycles and have been endlessly playing Enduro Racer without a hint of discouragement after multiple repetitions of the same route (I was very bad and getting to the second track was quite a challenge, but the ability to control the motorcycle and pleasure I got overwrote everything else). Watching few karate movies and listening to my brother's stories of Bruce Lee directed me towards martial arts and



let me play International Karate and Thai Boxing. I recall being very impressed with every possible way of hitting the opponent – the diversity of blows in IK was really impressive. Thai Boxing, on the other hand, featured injured face covered with more and more blood once the fight progressed – it isn't the most appropriate way of educating young kid, but it was surely an interesting experience nonetheless. The other day I watched lots of movies featuring tough American heroes and this brought me to Commando and Fernandez Must Die, where I also jumped on an all-terrain vehicle. Once or twice I found myself in the video game arcade and ended up playing Lazy Jones afterwards at home. Now I know its plot takes place in a hotel, but back then I was pretty sure it's just another arcade saloon. Till now I remember my fascination with

the fact, that there we so many little games included in this particular title. There are obviously more and more examples, as each single game turned out to be some kind of a symbol of my memories, childhood dreams and my own visions of life.

It is worth mentioning, that when we were young the whole gaming experience was more like a family thing. I, for example, was often playing games with my older brother (and also with my cousin, from whom I bought the computer later). The age difference created some sort of authority between us, but at the same time, guys also treated me with very warm and caring approach like older siblings would do, which for me was obviously very important and I am very fond of these memories, not only because of the video games. Together we've been digging

into the games, what you need to do in them, what's the game mechanic and so on - as you may know back in time it wasn't so obvious; playing together or against each other, or in the co-op, or just in the hot-seat – all depending on the nature of the game. One of the most favorite activities of mine was, as we called "to describe compact cassettes" (we had a whole box of MCs recorded by someone else, and on these so called "compilations" we were discovering new games, or unknown titles just to write them down, along with the units from the tape counter – believe me it was super exciting) . Interestingly, even if sometimes I went into a little fight with my brother (as happens with all siblings), a subsequent proposal of playing together on the computer was often the nature of "reach out to the agreement" and to dischar-



ge negative emotions. This, combined with all the good memories and family positive family atmosphere makes it worth coming back to with a lot of nostalgia.

For the above-described typical "family" memories there is also a general feeling of a carefree childhood and a sense of the life safety of those young years (with comparison to nowadays tough times). Back then, for most of us these were worry free time and the largest children's problems were matters totally trivial, from today's point of view. Most often, after turning off our computers we ran to do something equally exciting. Today, the video games play the role of a springboard and even escape mechanism (at least for me) from the much more difficult reality, and almost immediately after the computer or game console is being turned off, we are drag down by the "demons of adulthood" into the harsh day-to-day life. It's clear that this entire "safety shell", accompanied with youngsters adventures and struggles we had with a joy-sticks in our hand, is strongly connected and associated with today's fondness for the past.

At the end of this journey into careless past, let me take a note that goes beyond the world of 8/16 bit. When, after years of using C64, for a first time I experienced Amiga computer can do I almost fell off my

chair. And although I have played bit of Amiga games (I loved Mortal Kombat I / II, Franko and Litil Divil), ultimately instead of Amiga, I ended up with the PC. I know, I will have a beef with many of you, but for me these early PCs also had a soul (by early, I mean even my first 486DX2-66 CPU PC). Everyone is of course entitled to their own opinion on this subject, but that's how I see it myself (I was 12 back then and I was never into these wars between fans of different platforms). I am just adding this to make it clear that sometimes I like to launch DOS-Box and play these good old PC games (Fifa International Soccer), and I still have warm feelings towards this platform.

BUT IS THAT ALL IT IS...?

These memories suggest, that this whole nostalgia for the old games is just a pure desire to return to the good childhood memories. That there is only one simple mechanism here - I used to play video games and it was fun, today I want the same, just to feel young again. But saying that the old games do not hold any particular advantages is very much unfair. To say that all these old, timeless gems are not worth much is just a slap into history of gaming. The truth is that they are worth a lot, but not only as a part of the history, as they hold enormous sentimental value.

Nolan Bushnell (game designer and founder of Atari) once said that a perfect game is one that is both easy to learn and hard to master. That was a case in the past, because today's games often start with "hard to learn", with the second part to be questioned. The problem is that it is not easy just to start them. For example, it is virtually impossible to launch a game now and simply just return into it and play it without any problems. You may not remember what exactly you need to do, or where you ended up last time, or what are the key/pad bindings. For me, this is kind of a side effect of the current gaming mechanics' progressive complexity. This has its advantages, because thanks to the complexity, the game is multidimensional and deep, but at the same time it disqualifies the title as a type of game that you want to play from time to time. Old games are like time machines: you launch it and you know everything straight away - like in Matrix. The simplicity of a design is a solid reason to believe that old games were created to deliver quick entertainment - all based on the principle: you just sit down and play the game. This allowed (and still allows) too go through few dozens of games during one long gaming session. And today? Today, I play a lot on the gaming consoles (PS3) - and because of the huge differences in the mecha-

tics and the keys-binding: (or rather pad-binding) of each game, I hardly jump between them anymore, just to keep the habit and try not to mix the controls too much. And I see it as a problem, because even if the game is really good, after few hours of playing it causes a certain "fatigue". Now, a typical modern game is like a good movie, the story is deep and the storytelling is super engaging. It feels great when you watch it for the first time, but it has zero replayability value, I rarely want to return and play once finished game again. I'd rather just watch the game walk-through on YouTube instead of going into the game and through the whole re-learning process all over.

We have to remember that back in the days, the key element for a good game was the concept and the idea. The programmer (usually a hobbyist) first wondered what he or she would like to play and then he or she created the game into this vision. Thanks to this, the games created in the past are so unconventional, original and unique. Today, we are living in commerce times, and the true art has been replaced by craftsmanship. And when on some occasions something super original is being released (check e.g. Goat or Slice of Bread Simulators) – it being perceived more of a "joke", designed to meet marketing needs and to induce a shock effect caused by the element of

absurd. Today, the only real place for innovation is Indie games. By the way, these games are creating an interesting bridge to cover the gap between retro and modernity, but that's a topic for a different article. Today's games (mostly from the AAA segment) mainly focus on storytelling, making this a key element of the game – to the extent where player, even though he wants to go deeper into the story, is bored by repetitive game mechanics. On the flip side, good old game, sometimes without a story was focusing purely on the gameplay, focusing on mastering this element. In today's games, you just play to finish the story, just to get to the end, or into next stage, where we play retro games for pure fun, just



to play it. They bring you endless entertainment where you enjoy every second of the game and even though you replay same level over and over again it still gives you a lot of fun.

The graphics in the old games, seen by some mockers as unworthy of any attention, should still be treated as a piece of art. Although the video games today require much more attention in this matter, I also feel that this work is more about simple craftsmanship, and less about the actual art and skills itself (don't get me wrong, you still have to be an artist to craft it). Nowadays, it is more about polygons and textures, where back in time the only thing that mattered, was a size and amount of pixel used to create a character in-game. It was necessary to distribute the resources better (because no one would doubt, that the character from let's say, "Commando" was less brave and efficient than main hero from, for example, "Call Of Duty") to get the best possible effect. The background elements in many video games should be also treated as a piece of art. It is amazing how efficient the devs were back in the day, when they were able to create amazing and breathtaking settings with just few tools in their hands. Same story goes with a whole sound design: today, to create a good atmosphere in a random horror game, developers use real orchestra and they re-

cord live music, back in the old days the only tool that was available was humble, but still gorgeous, SID (you guys remember the whole audio in Castle Of Terror? Thank you SID for all the shivers we got). Not sure about you, but I have noticed a very interesting trend where, so many games from the aforementioned segment of "indie games" intentionally uses pixels and stylize their products to resemble good old 8-bit hits – partially, this might be driven by the need to attract those who may feel nostalgic with this type of graphics, but also because indie games creators most likely see it as a part of a computer graphic art. And maybe it is not accurate comparison, but it is like using charcoal technique, whilst having a box full of colour paints right next to you. Additionally, we have to remember about the fact than the life span of new video games is way shorter than the old games, the reason behind it is that the graphics in the new productions age way faster, and these new games usually start to look "bad" after year or two. The truth is, as in many earlier examples – those new titles usually make a good impression, just to be quickly forgotten.

AND THE CONCLUSION IS ALWAYS THE SAME...

We often tend to say that the truth lies somewhere in the middle and I believe

this is also the case here. We could obviously praise the character of retro gaming, commend on their explorative solutions, true beauty of pixel artworks, the unity of playability and simplicity, and nobody could effectively disagree. I personally believe though that all these feelings won't be worth that much without the entire aspect of childhood memories. Without this combination of our own sentiment bundled together with hobbies, adventures, passions and hours-long sessions spent in front of our TVs together with friends and family.

In fact I'm very curious about one thing. Would the kids of today's generation, who mainly discover the digital entertainment through photorealistic and deeply role-playing titles, be as sentimental about their childhood's games as we are after years? Or perhaps will they just move on and comprehend their old games as junk and nothing more than that? In the future someone may write similar piece of editorial to recall memories through their own gaming experience and bring up feelings associated with that. Only then we might be able to learn whether old games "only" reflect our past or there is something much deeper beyond.



A Confession

■ Editorial: Hery; Translated by Slayerpl

— I lost hope, my father. I rejected 8bit computers.....

— Not only you, my son. Not only you.

— A long time ago I was misguided by PC fad.

— You were young. How could you know.....

— They crept into our thoughts. They promised better things, an easier life. They promised more time for us. They set our world going. They were supposed to connect us and they divided us even more. They promised more friends and love. Instead of friends, they gave us social networks and hundreds of Internet acquaintances, instead of love — porn websites.

— You are right, my son. There were programs years ago which had lead us to the evil side....

— *Samantha Fox Strip Poker, Girls They Want to Have Fun...* I wanted to mention more, but I bit my tongue. Forgive me,

father — I whispered ashamed. I felt a blush on my cheeks.

- Don't be too harsh on yourself. A youthful fascination with the anatomy of a woman's body is beyond the good and the evil. You cannot ignore the beauty in the purest form. Besides that, it was like an education for family life in the future. You need to have moderation. It is dangerous to spend a lot of time admiring the wonders of nature. You need to meet people.

- Back then it was easier...I often met my friends for a party, I exchanged with them the software, I shared my experience. And now....

— And we have, unfortunately, Internet.

— The Internet killed the intimacy of the contact between a human and a computer — I continued dejected. Everything became open, easily and quickly available.

- We live in such times — the

priest sighed.

— All the evil began at the moment of building of the modular computer. It took their soul. It made them hybrids with many faces. One name, a lot of options and operational systems. A complicatedness with entanglement. How to do things with one computer, if after a short period of time it becomes a relic? We are superficial when we come into contact with computer. We don't try to understand its' secrets, because we don't have time for it, because it is too much for us, because after two, three years we buy new hardware.

— Earlier the world was easier, more understandable, more human. Now they made a lot of electronic rubbish, they created a lot of programming languages, some javas, javascripts, visualbasics, pythons.... Phooey! Sinners! They make up a lot of devil dialects! Have they forgotten about the Babel Tower? "Tempora, mores!" The time of apocalypse is near.

— My father, and the computer graphics? What did the contemporary graphics cards? Because of them the pixel lost its' material meaning, it became unnoticeably small, it evaporated, it moved into non-existence. Now it is a notion without meaning, an abstract thing. And the world in 160 x 200 dimension is more beautiful....And the horrible color extravagance. Who needs 32bit colour palette?





How can you multiply the existences without a need?

Exactly! A long time ago a synod convened by Pius VI accepted a dogma that a human eye can accurately differentiate between merely 16 colours. To hear the whispers of the devil and think up new colours — human vanity has no boundaries. — I lost hope, my father, because I forgot how much joy dealing with my 8bit computer gave to me. It was like playing with the LEGO set where I could use my every idea and from which I could build infinite number of worlds. I felt an enormous joy of creating, I was the maker. I did not need an extremely fast CPU or a great graphics card. When I typed in a machine code, when I spoke to my computer with the language of numbers, the only one he understood, I felt a close bond with him. The computer was an organic extension of my thoughts and my imagination. When I was closer to it, I reached for the eternal truths, I discovered the great mystery of existence. When I use the PC, I'm only an artisan, a passive imitator. — I stopped. I noticed clearer than earlier how indifferent, emotionless relation I have towards PC's, which

I came across, and how many great memories are connected with my inseparable companion from the childhood.

— Forgive me my sins, because I sinned — I asked through my tightened throat.

— Don't lose hope. Be faithful to the 8bit faith and you will be awarded. Two numbers: 8 and 16 create an everlasting harmony of the world. Woe betides somebody that in blindness worships 32 and 64 computers. The time of debauchery has come! The assembler and BASIC will come back in glory! In place of a not moving indicator our eyes will be delighted as earlier by the flicking indicator. The novelties will fade as quickly, as the fad showed up, and in the end nothing will survive from the glitter of this world.

So the only thing that we need to care about, is the memory of early youth with its' greatest joy—the first computer.

The priest's words filled me with the emotion and faith. I have hidden my sentiment to old computers for many years, my true love. Now, when I could confess it openly, I felt a relief, if I was relieved from a huge burden. A peace was back in my heart.

— As an atonement you will

finish "Montezuma's Revenge"

— The voice of the priest was powerful and harsh.

— Father, but I...

— I know, what they say, my son. But you have to believe! Believe! Because the hidden chambers open before these that believe.

— Yes, father — I responded remorseful. I had a strong will of penance in me.

— And I will you also do this atonement: you will load without turbo a couple of games, you will stop and notice the value of time because everyone can rush headlong and few can wait for the end.

The priest said an absolving sentence and ended it with words:

— I absolve your sins. Go and sin no more. Let the love of retrocomputers lead you and the spirit of the past watch you.

— Amen..



Rules of Demoscene

■ Editorial: Ramos; Translated by Tomasz Kubisztal

Can an informal, non-organized community have rules and a law of its own? Answer seems simple and obvious. Every, even officially unrecognized society or even subculture have its own rules – and Demoscene is no different. These rules are regarded and used accordingly for its activity. It seems natural that when something is being created, shaped and adapted to new conditions it's difficult to create complex system of rules at once. However, it's completely different situation when given subculture has been existing for years and have already worked out specific rules.

Rules of the scene can be compared to code of good behavior, *savoir vivre*. In this case many rules pertain to person's behavior otherwise not regulated by legal or moral rules. All these rules were created by people who were active throughout demoscene and who have taken their first steps in that area.

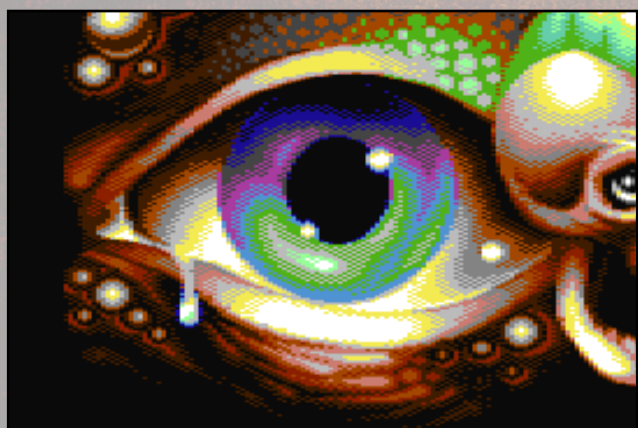
The way of behaving in the scenic community is being evaluated only by other members of such group. It can be said that there are penalties of some sort for not following the given rules. While breaking legal rules is followed by punishment, breaking moral rules is followed by criticism and condemnation, and in case of social rules – it's being ridiculed. The society we live in

has our actions judged accordingly – whether we like it or not. On Demoscene we won't be given a ticket or put to jail. Anyway, it's up to us whether we identify ourselves with people creating given subculture. If so – we should follow it's established rules. However, how should we follow any rules if they're not recorded in any way or even not known to us to begin with? Every one of us has some sort of morality: a collection of norms specifying what is right and what is wrong. We live our lives according to these rules. In the 80's, when scene was being formed nobody gave much thought about any rules or regulations. New subculture was being created and with time, by itself, it started enforcing specific customs. However nobody acted blindly, since everyone could differ what seems right or wrong. Thanks to this direction first rules of Demoscene were being formed.

One of the first rules of Demoscene was leaving one's signature only in programs created by given person. In the beginning it was customary to sign one's program by given name

and surname, but with time custom of signing with one's nickname was adapted from Crack scene. Such custom was used for easier recognition of given creator and to hide one's official personal data. Creators of demoscene felt like artists of sorts and considered their work as art, anyway, so like true artists signed their work with their nicknames. It can be easily observed on the example of visual art creators, who usually left their visible signature in the upper right corner of given work. The custom was adapted from painting artists, who marked their work in such way.

Creation of new community was treated like fun by all concerned. Personal computers were then regarded as toys: destined for fun, like more advanced home consoles. All creators using them were supposed to have a good time and act fairly toward other members of Demoscene concerning given computer system. However, it wasn't always all fun, since there were always those, who wanted to make harm to others or prove that they deserve praise and recognition. Such



people were labeled as lamers. On computer scene it is regarded an insult, however maybe not as severe as it used to be. Until the mid-90's all people not concerned with Demoscene or interested only in gaming were still considered lamers. Also, members of the scene breaking the established rules were labeled in such way. Such label had to be "deserved" by particularly shameful deeds. This leads us to first and major rule of the scene: signing someone else's work with own name. When scene was still developing and more and more people were joining it – it also concerned people who didn't act in a fair way, wrongly assigning authorship to works they didn't create. In most cases it regarded visual works, however there were also instances regarding music or "stealing" somebody's code from demos. The easiest breach was signing one's signature as author of somebody else's graphic, since programs developed especially for this purpose (rippers) were available. It was enough to "rip" given graphic, load it using the editing software, modify it in chosen way and add one's signature. For instance, polish magazine C&A from time to time published graphics ripped from western demos signed by lamers, who wanted to win running graphic-of-the-month contest. Other type of unfair behavior was leaving one's signature

under scanned graphic. Such activity was especially intensive during 90's, when technology developed further and allowed converting and downloading graphics from more advanced computer systems, like Amiga or PC, to Commodore 64. For example, in 1993, year after publishing graphic collection "Portfolio" by group Triad so called "Scandale Dane" took place. Graphic artist of the group – Dane (currently working for Booze Design) – ripped scan from old work "Playboy-Show 3" developed by group The Supersonics and after modifying added his signature. He even presented one of the graphics from the collection during a party. More details about the case are available in the scene magazine Vandalism News 17 and Relax November Issue.

There was also quite a lot of software dedicated for modifying graphics taken from more advanced computers. Graphic artists started using them in their work. It led to huge disagreement and never-ending discussions in the magazines. German graphic artist Rayden, who started creating his works on Amiga computer tend to transfer files to Commodore 64 to correct them slightly later on. Such actions were immediately condemned. It was stated that artists creating their works on Commodore 64 computers only

had no chance against those who used Amiga and more advanced graphic software. It seems obvious that on more advanced hardware programs had better capabilities and offered easier work, leading to new graphical effects.

Current development and new conditions (meaning, scene being adapted on emulators on PC computers) changed perception of creating graphic art on C-64. Close to nobody minds creating art by PC software, which is later transferred and modified on C-64 computer or emulator. Nobody minds canning graphics. There are many reasons for such attitude. Above all: it's creating graphics in faster and more suitable way. But the major reason for this is lack of past competition in the form of charts published in scene magazines. For those less informed: charts used to be some sort of toplist of the best creators and works on the scene (i.e. demos, collections, graphic and musical artists, programmers other scene professions), published in the past by disc magazines or chartsmags, particularly popular for Amiga. The times have changed, and so did expectations of artists themselves.

Another interesting case was allowing transferring graphic works by professional, known artists or interesting graphic arts



(i.e. books or science fiction art) to the form of computer graphic. Particularly popular in this aspect were works by Boris Vallejo.

Surprisingly, such works even happened to win on graphic contests during parties. For some reason nobody minded such modifications, since scanners back in the day were still imperfect. Pixeling (technique of creating graphic by putting down pixels single-handedly, one by one) manually by the artists, without using any specialized (apart from basic) functions of graphic software was more efficient than scanning. It was similar for music – on music contests covers of known songs often won over original compositions. Also mixes of known tracks gathered a lot of interest. By now it has changed – currently, it is required that only original work can enter graphic or musical contest. However, even to this day it happens that somebody manages to "smuggle" redrawn graphic or musical cover as a contest entry.

Second important rule was the fact that everything published



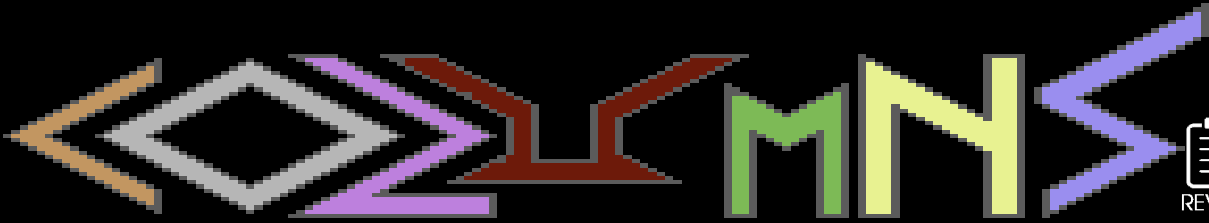
and made available on the scene was product on public domain basis. All products published on the scene used to follow such rule. Public domain is a free license making a program commonly owned, meaning that it's author or authors have gave up their right for gratification for its usage. Thanks to this all works could be freely copied and further redistributed without worries. Authors of programs on the scene always stress that their work is not made in order to earn money and in no way do they gain any profit from it. Therefore, in old, polish productions before running them there used to be visible disclaimer in the lines of

"This is Public Domain production. Selling prohibited". Unfortunately, in Poland during period of development of computer markets there were also people who sold such programs. Such

activity was widely criticized and fought with by members of Demoscene.

It can be said that far too often somebody's work (i.e. music or graphic art) was being used in another production without original author's consent. Back in the day, it used to be customary thing to rip music or graphic art from a video game and put it into one's own work. Nobody minded that, despite that from legal and moral point of view that was unfair. Both video game music and graphic art had their copyright, so they were not supposed to be transferred from original work and used further in other productions. But back then, when there were few people on the scene able to make quality music, they use to just use compositions by professional musicians developing works for video games, for instance Rob Hubbard's. However, established rule was to at least include information about original author of used graphic art or music in the credits (list of people who developed given work). Thanks to this rule also work by given artist gained popularity, thus contributing to his recognition.





■ Review: Komek; Translated by Slayerpl

Sometimes it happens that something insignificant can leave a mark on one of the thousands pages of a history book and stay in our and next generation's memory. Sometimes you do not need a lot for this to happen..... If I asked randomly selected persons....hmmm, for instance about Rubik's cube, I'm sure that I would get some answers, because who does not know what is Rubik's cube? Alright, and if the question was about Tetris? I think that there would be people, who have no clue, but definitely a number of them would be small.

If we talk about *Tetris* we should mention that this popular logical game was created by a Russian programmer named Aleksiej Pazytnow in 1984 using a computer Elektronika 60. This game had so many versions for different platforms that we would not be able count them now. One of this proverbial "thousand" versions of Tetris is a game titled *Columns*, with which I will deal in the next part of my text.

A lot of time passed since 1984. In 2006 Tetris was once again remade and this is how *Columns* for Commodore Plus/4 was created. I think that it is a nice game for the fans of this sort of games which shouldn't be omitted.

Even though the *Tetris* games were and are usually the same, innovations appear

in some of the versions. It is a more standard approach in this situation because we deal with the falling down vertically columns which are made up

the speed of a falling down column increases. And when we exceed 100 points, the game becomes faster. If you have more than 5000 points,

you receive the title of the "Master of the game".

The summary of the game is as follows: colorful graphics, neat and in a good style. The music is a little bit monotonous, but lively and cheerful. Playability on a nice level. Even if you are not a fan of *Tetris*,

I promise you will spend at least half an hour playing it.



of three colorful squares with the same color. The objective of this game is arranging the columns in such a way to link the three squares of the same color. We have three possibilities to link the squares: vertical, horizontal and diagonal. You can change colors using the "fire" button and when we direct the joystick downwards

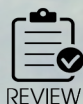
////// **Tetris genre**

This is exactly the Tetris genre. Lots of various products in many different shapes and colors. Something is falling down here, and there something else already lies on the floor. One has to operate quickly, but some of us still spent too many hours in front of the moving blocks. Dry and red eyes hurt, but the game play is always super enjoyable!

COLUMNS

Publisher: Electronic Knights (TEK)
Year of publication: 2006
Platform: Plus/4

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Legion

■ Review: Ramos; Translated: Atreus/Tomxx

RPG turn-based games first started to show up in the middle of 90's. This article describes the first Polish release of that kind and takes an opportunity to present the history of that game. I also want to deny some myths and facts about this product.

Legion is a game which combines role-playing, trading and adventure. Its extensive construction combines multiple threads that are further described in this article.

The concept of this game was probably born in a spring of 1995. Marcin Puchta came up with an idea for such game and started the coding. Unfortunately, he didn't know the assembly language and so he decided to fully write it in AMOS. At the early stage the game was created on expanded Amiga 1200, which was intended to be the main configuration for the release. Unfortunately, main publisher – Mirage Media – requested source code reduction in the way that it would use less memory, run on Amiga 500 and oc-

cupy smaller space on floppy disks. Everybody knows that more floppy disks means higher price. Reducing a program that was initially written for expanded Amiga 1200 wasn't an easy task though. Author had to cut down everything he could find in order to shorten down the main program. He did succeed, main goal was achieved and the game was ready to be released on two floppy disks. This was the important and crucial call for the publisher, as at that time most of players still owned the Amiga 500 sets. And obviously A500 was a cheaper hardware and this directly affected the demand for such game. In June 1996 this title was added to Mirage software catalogue and the price was set for 40 PLN (roughly \$10). Few months

later, in September 1996, the game was completed for A1200 and it was added to the same catalogue for identical price. Strangely enough, this game was selling very well as for the Polish standards of mid ,90s. In August 1996, Polish magazine *Secret Service* published a review featuring this game and presented *Legion* in superlatives. It received

quite high score in graphics, music and creativity which gave the title a total of 80 points. I personally think this was a small exaggeration. Similarly, the game received positive critique from European markets, although the title still had bugs in its code and the graphics was of very average quality. So, where did this enthusiasm come from? Possibly because this game was developed by a Polish team and has ensured relatively complex entertainment. Various Amiga-scene members announced: "This production is a pioneer of Polish RPG games". Originally the game was secured. It relied on writing down some letters from the manual when the security check pops in. For example, in the middle of a fight the game might have suddenly asked: "Give me the first letter of third word from fifth row on page four". Pages were numbered at the bottom, but the rest had to be manually checked by player himself and it usually took a while! Today we can easily download the manual from the internet or run cracked version of this game. And there is also a version suitable for hard drive installation.

Ok, we're done with the first part of this article. Now it's time to move on and describe the





game itself. We launch the game from the hard drive, because running *Legion* from floppies might be annoying. After a short time we see main menu and 3 options to choose from: start, load or quit game. In our case we'll choose the starting option. First off, we'll need to choose a name for our warrior and then specify names of our enemies. After that we'll be taken to the main map view. The game allows us to play in 2 different modes, so we have a choice in what way we want to see an action. First, there is a very approximate view featuring small, symbolic elements. If you prefer to see more details you have to zoom in, which is the second mode. At this stage we also have access to the heroes from our legion. The game allows us to form multiple teams, which can all consist of warriors, archers, amazons, paladins, elves, mages and kobolds. At the very beginning our enemies have more strength and 3 legions. We start the game with a single legion that includes couple of warriors and small amount of money that is only good enough for some basic equipment. We don't have any other choice than collecting some more funds. We can achieve that by tax exaction from inhabitants of cities we currently own. We can also plunder the valuable loot left over by the enemies we annihilated. Another option is obviously trading.

Usually a good idea is to obtain solid equipment for our troops. And by that I mean acquiring good armor, magic helmet and sturdy boots. With such equipment on we have

ensured a fairly solid protection and additionally, in regards to boots, we can move much faster. Keep in mind though that armor is not everything you will need on your journey – your troops must also be armed. The choice of weapons is wide and you can choose between bows, swords, spears, axes, hammers, clubs or even catapults. Bear in mind that the effectiveness of weapons depends on warrior's race. We should also ensure that someone on our legion can use magic effectively (mages, elves or paladins). Spells have the power to suppress opponents, healing our warriors, but are desirable also due to their destruction power, so let's remember about the impact of magic during your game. In order to be able to cast a spell we will need a magic scroll and proper amount of magic points.

Cities that were briefly mentioned before should be expanded and upgraded, but only once we have enough resources (money and troops). It's

a good idea to surround them with a protection wall, but in this case you can't forget to put up some archers for proper defense. The point is to wipe out enemies by ranged archers once they are busy destroying our walls.

During the fight itself, the location of our warriors is extremely important. The first wave should consist of heavily armored units and only on their sides we should place humans, paladins, elves and amazons. Mages should be obviously placed at the back row of our army. Things looks different





when we're conquering the fortress – it's important to place our mages and archers in front of the troops, because their weapons have a great range of fire and they can easily kill our enemies on ramparts.

Another important component of the game is the conversation with people we come across. Effective communication will help us gathering important

information that could be utilized later.

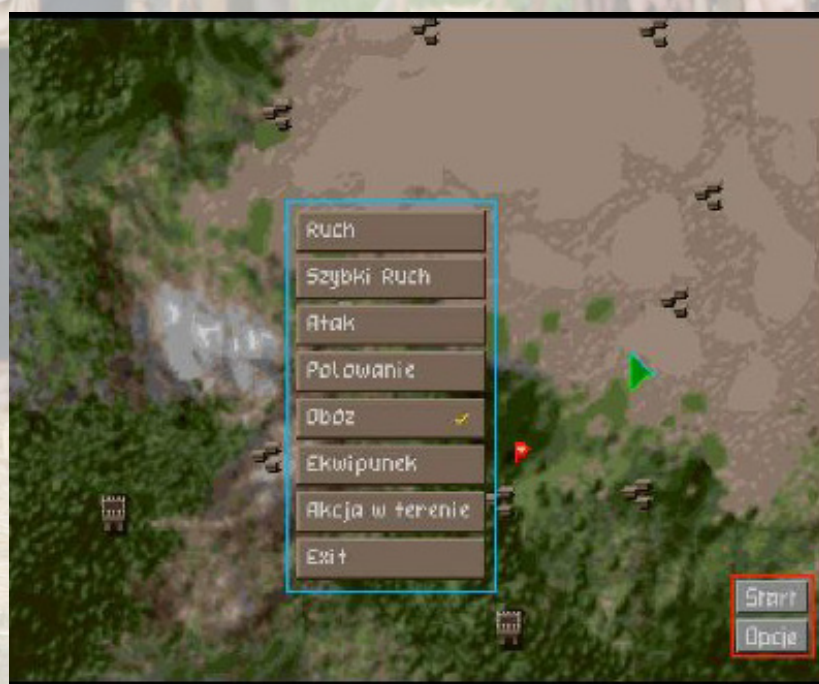
The introduction to the game isn't breathtaking. It starts with simple "Long time ago... There was a land... Its inhabitants live mainly from cultivation, hunting and trade. They would live peacefully if they wouldn't be attacked by Chaos Legions". Here is where our mission starts and the goal is to defeat the

Legions of Chaos. From the technical point of view, it's a good habit to often save the progress as the game can crash and exit to AmigaDOS. Storing your progress on a floppy will require a blank disk. The problem obviously doesn't exist in the Hard Disk version. Combat system starts with our team being teleported to the battle area. The control is ensured through the mouse, so joystick maniacs will be disappointed. We see our heroes from the

top or side view. Moving units around is achieved by placing an order. At the beginning of a game we only have one Legion, so care is strongly advised in our decisions. Legions usually consist of 4 or 5 troops and the same rule applies to our enemies. The beginning of the game is very difficult and you need to spend a lot of time to master each aspect of the gameplay and simple strategy might not be enough to grand victory. Chaos Legions will attack everything and everywhere in 120 days. This is the time we have to create our "Super Legion" consisting of elite warriors that can effectively face them.

Let me add something about the final part of the game where we fight Lord of Chaos and his soldiers. Winning is awarded with an image (IMHO of average quality) and victorious sentence: "Here's the one who destroyed all life. Now he's lying at his own feet". In my opinion this is quite strange and improperly written ending statement. After some long time of waiting we can see another smaller picture followed by the sentence: "... Your adventure is finished" and after that we see a picture with a skull and a "Game Over" logo.

Unfortunately, *Legion* has got couple of issues that negatively affected the gameplay. The most irritating component is the copy protection mechanism. Program just too often asks us to confirm content originality, so we have to play with the manual in our hands. Units' movement system is also legitimately terrible! I think the reason behind it might be related





to the necessary reduction of game's source code. Our heroes just can't avoid obstacles on their way. Sometimes we need to spend too much time just to be able to move our troops through some narrow section of the map. Also, our troops very often fall into holes, traps etc., which also negatively impact their movement. Another issue is that the program kicks out to AmigaDOS far too often, so the best solution is to save the game progress very often.

Okay, let's summarize: sound is pretty average and I've heard better tunes in other productions that were similarly made "in home studios". We can hear that the samples aren't of the best quality. The person responsible for audio was Marcin Puchta. There is a piece of good music, but it only plays at the beginning of game. The game also disappointed me in regards to the graphics created by Andrzej Puchta, main programmer's brother, as everything we see on screen is very dull and average. *Legion* only has a beau-

tiful box cover artwork, but nothing beside it. Unfortunately, even the fighting system looks weak. In my opinion the game was tested in a very chaotic way and this might be the reason on why there are so many mistakes on top with the terrible copy protection part. I've previously heard some rumors that

games of that type. Our *Legion* only sometimes was mentioned at the end of someone's TOP list. Nevertheless, one thing they've said was that this is still the best Polish RPG title for Amiga. Perhaps this game has still many fans across Polish players, but I definitely didn't feel it this way.



the quality of *Legion* was equal to foreign releases. After checking this statement with other Amiga gamers across Western Europe I revealed that they haven't even heard of this Polish production or in best case, they didn't take this game into consideration when creating their TOP lists of RPG titles. They've listed other games with *Eye of the Beholder*, *Ambermoon*, *Amberstar*, *Alien Fires* and many of

There is also an English version of *Legion* on Amiga, as well as a PC version ported by Marek Lech, who completely moved this game from Amos language into C++.

Legion

Publisher: Mirage
Media

Year of publication: 1996

Platform: Amiga





Demons of Dex – Eino's Quest

■ Review: Bobikowoz; Translated by Bobikowoz

The arch druid has become old and it is time for somebody to replace him. According to tradition his position shall be passed to a man brave enough to defeat three Demon Lords from the Dex dungeon. You are Eino. It is time to set foot on a road to enlightenment and glory related to arch druid position.

Demons of Dex - Eino's Quest is a roguelike game. If you haven't heard this term before, basically it is a quite random game, where you need to descend deeper into some dungeon and level up your character. Graphics in this type of production usually consists only of ascii characters. Another important rule is permanent death. No matter how well you have developed your charac-

ter if he dies, you have to start over.

According to the tradition of the genre graphic design in this game is symbolic. You need to use our imagination to make a bat from B or to change letter Z into undead.

hearts, two dead demons on your list, but a fight with a common orc can with some bad luck can take it all away. Before you hit him for the first time you get three clean strikes and suddenly you notice a group of undead coming your way. Do I have to add that in this situation you just run out of healing potions?

Trivia

The game has been created by Petri Häkkinen, co-creator of Legend of Grimrock series and a co-founder of Almost Human studio. If you would like to play the game without VIC-2 emulator, the game is available on-line at this link:

<http://tinyurl.com/DemonsOfDex>

Code of the game is publicly available on GitHub:

<https://github.com/petrihakkinen/demons>

Apart from generic drawback, there is nothing bad I can say about this game. As far as I know author put into the code literally everything he could. VIC-20 is an aging machine with only 3583 bytes of memory, but

each byte is being used while playing "Eino's Quest". There are a dozen of different dungeons, special effects during demon encounters, nice "fog of war" effect and some music. All of that is fit inside a code not much larger than this text..

Subsequent levels brings new letters... excuse me, new monsters, as well as new color schemes of the surroundings. Emerald caves, abandoned muddy mines, ice caverns - with a free mind you can experience rather interesting adventure! If you do not trust me, try to play after a few beers :)

Demons of Dex is not a difficult game, but the death lurks at Eino from every single corner. The most dangerous enemy is not any of the monsters, but the randomness of the gameplay. You can have five healthy



Demons of Dex - Eino's Quest

Publisher: **Petri Häkkinen**
Year of publication: **2015**
Platform: **VIC20**





Jump Ninja



■ Review: noctropolis; Translated by MA

Do you feel like jumping in this, at the first glance, in this undemanding but engaging new production? So take you joysticks and let's play! You will play as an unusual ninja warrior, the one that in contrast to popular image is not slim and sporty but rather is an owner of a big belly. Having such a belly may make us surprised that this character can jump as high as he can, but it's obvious that the realism of the movement isn't important here. It is the humour that counts here. ;-).

It is worth to mention the fact that, as we can read in a short info before the main screen, Jump Ninja was created by Wanax (with the help of saulc12) especially for his son Francesco. He did it to make his son fall in love with C64. By the way it is a great gift and surely it will be remembered by the son in the years to follow as it didn't require a lot of money. On the contrary, it was self-made using a lot of passion and heart.

But let's talk about the game. Although at first it's style bears resemblance to a very popular "one-button" games such as Flappy Bird or Canabalt, it is just half the truth as difficulty here is higher as you not only hit the fire button but you also have to use directions to steer

our character. You have to do it quite skilfully as the stage is in constant movement.

What is more interesting and surprising (for such productions) the game is not an endless one. At the bottom of the screen we can see not only the score and the number of the lives left but there are also the number of a current level and

a progress bar. A good idea is also to include a system of check points (seen as a vertical lines on the progress bar) which enables us, in case of unfortunate landing, to continue the game from a certain point and not the beginning. Additional element, in later stages, are enemies and various obstacles.



Although in games as this the most important aspect is its playability, what is worth noticing is its beautiful and colourful hi-res graphics. It can be described as a simple one but at the same time it is really "clean" and friendly. We have a really smooth movement of a stage, water and the bottom of the stage moves slower than the rest of what you can see and the sun and clouds remain motionless. The atmosphere of the game is quite

friendly and if I could wish for something more it would be the greater variety of backgrounds in the different stages of the game. The game has a nice music which resembles that of orient origin and it can be described as neither great nor bad.

The Jump Ninja game is definitely worth playing, even though you can't play with your own son yet. The game is not as difficult and hard as it seems at the beginning

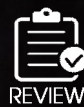
and after some time spent with it you can get quite skilful with it. Although I'm generally not good at playing arcade games, here I had no problems with playing it, which in the end resulted in having a lot of fun with it. I definitely recommend it.

JUMP NINJA

Publisher: **Wanax**
Year of publication: **2016**
Platform: **C64**

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Serpent Caves

■ Review: Komek; Translated by Komek

Have you ever dreamed that you are in a cave full of poisonous snakes? Or you may have seen a movie in which hissing reptiles lie and wait for a victim? Maybe you had the opportunity to be in this place, but I don't think so. Anyway, fortunately I did not, yuck!!!

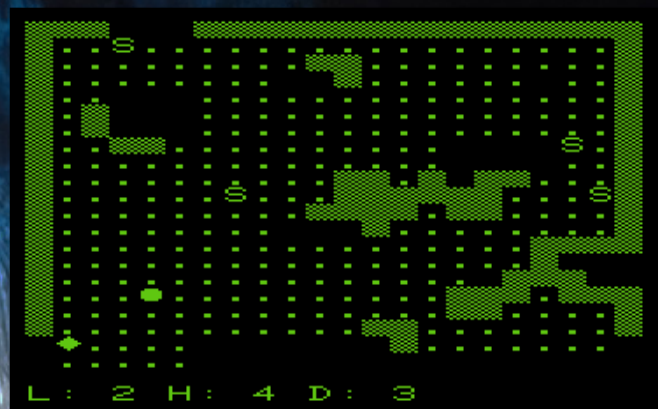
All right, and what if the serpents and caves would be only the part of the video game? Sure, I would agree to take part in this adventure. Without fear and pain, without emergency medical service and antivenin, but only emotions and will to survive.

Serpent Cave video game is just an encounter with poisonous snakes in the dark cave. Besides, title of the game explains a lot, but what is the goal? Nobody in their right mind would want to be in such a place! Here is a decoy, I mean the precious diamonds!!! I'm sure that you'll want take as much of them as possible. Well, that's it. You have to go through nine caves. It probably isn't everything, because I found some information that this project is in progress. When you start the level on the screen only some little points can be seen around the full circle (full circle is you). With further moves the computer draws next elements of a game. When the screen displays an empty circle you must know that it's an underpass to the next cave, sometimes it shows up after the beginning of the level. Of course, you can go right now, but is better if you

take all the diamonds from the cave. Serpent Caves' graphic is just the character set PETSCII from the Commodore PET. Personally I like this style. This picture shows what the function the character has and how to use the keys to move around the cave.

At the beginning of the game it's quite easy, but that's okay, because there is time to get adjusted. You're wrong if you think that level of difficulty will always be similar, because the final levels are a great challenge.

The quality of graphic and sound is not important here. The most important thing in this case is playability which is good. Exactly! Such a little game made with characters and it's got the power! Playing Serpent Caves will make you want more and more diamonds and tremble with fear of poisonous snakes.



SERPENT CAVES

Publisher: **Ravenxau**
Year of publication: **2015**
Platform: **VIC20**





Dork Dave and the Dirty Trick

■ Review: Komek; Translated by Slayerpl

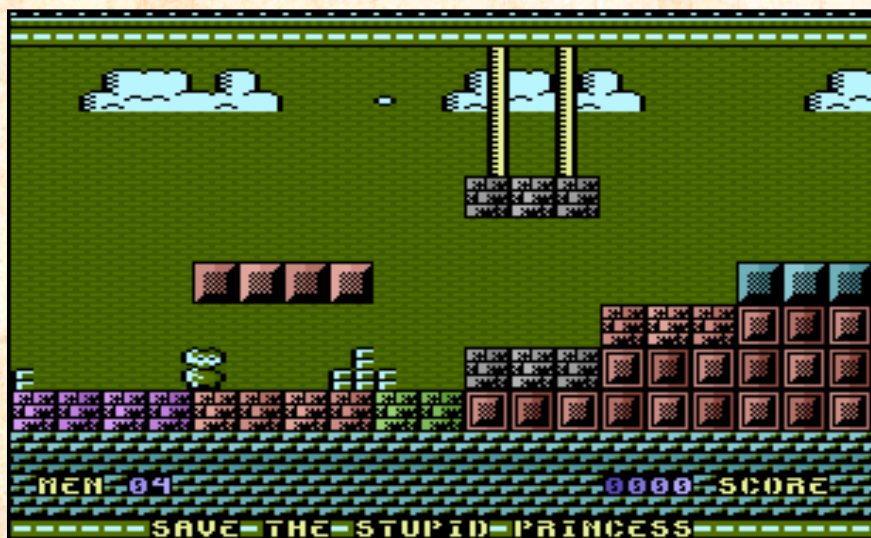
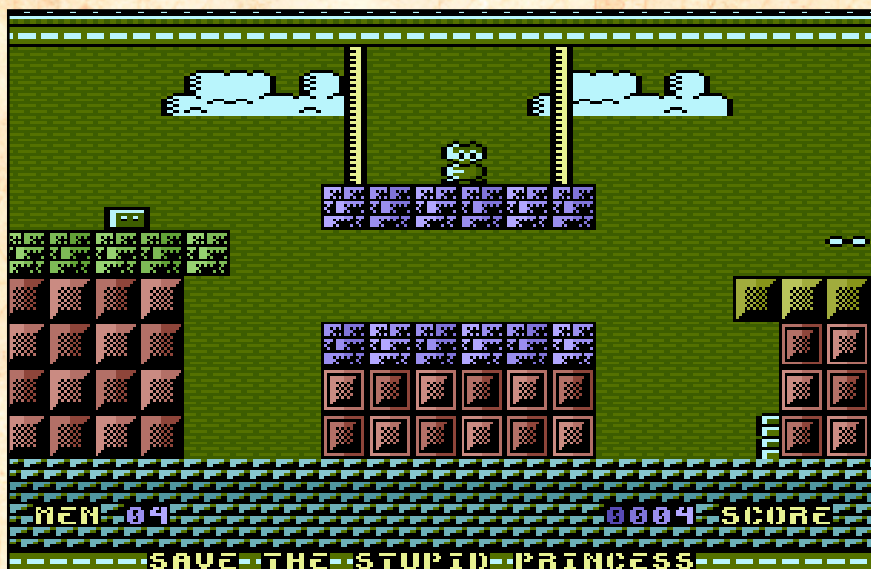
*When something torments you and the HUD shows zero,
Remove bad thoughts out of your head, otherwise you won't feel like a hero.
There are, fortunately, many ways to relieve you from your stress.
Discover yourself how the time goes in this colourful, childish place.
Odd creatures here and there, the bizarre plants,
They fill your eyes, let the game commence!*

Exactly!!! Platform adventure games are, in my opinion, one of the best antidepressants. They have usually colourful scenery, straight from a fairy tale, the protagonists are odd or funny creatures, and we gather dur-

ing ur journey things like: diamonds, stars, hearts, coins, fruits etc. All those surroundings create unforgettable and positive mood and provide us with an energy boost.



Grown-ups enjoy platform games. Why? Because they know, that these kind of games aren't violent, so they can easily let their kids playing them. Additionally, sometimes they also like to detach from the world's problems and dive into the colorful and cartoon universes...



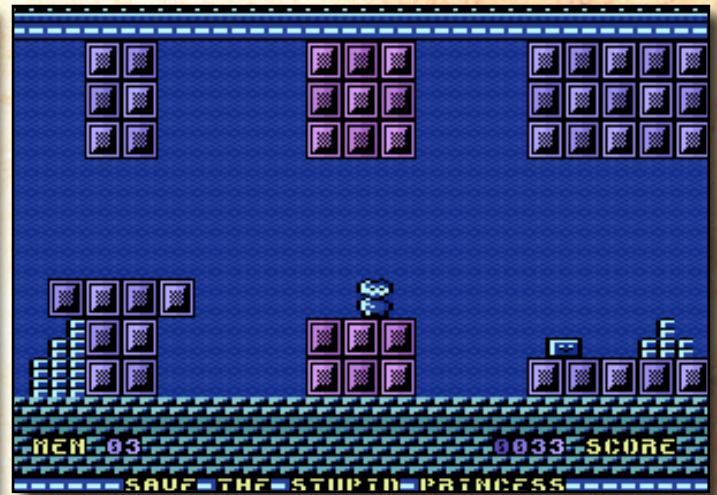
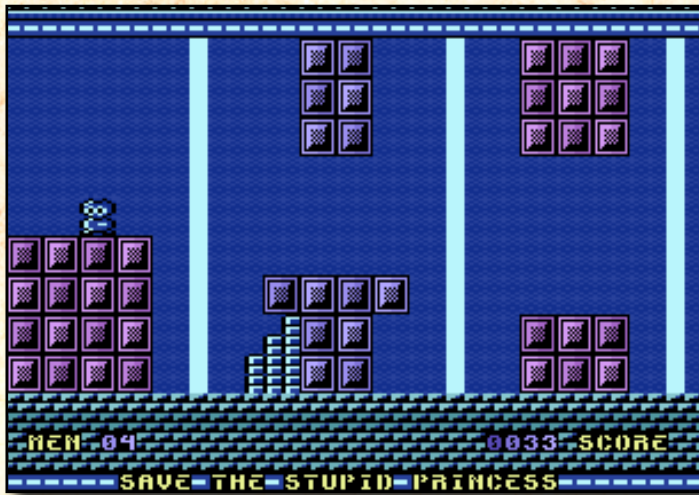
The game with a bizarre title Dork Dave and the Dirty Trick is a typical platform game, which was created by Mika Keranen, Finnish coder who has created another great C64 release (Mr Angry Dude). Even though you won't find in it odd creatures, coins or stars etc., the way in which it was created, speaks for itself. There are a lot of borrowings from Super Mario Bros but I think it is a huge advantage which increases its' playability.

Generally, my impression is that the game looks NES - like.

Immediately after launching the game I felt that I am missing something. I'm thinking about some funny, colourful picture or a nice intro because the game is so good that it could be made more awesome by adding this type of elements.

Generally, I didn't notice a concrete objective in the game. I know only that its' main protagonist, titular Dave, is an idiot, dork....and he has to save a stupid princess, but is it true? Unfortunately, I cannot write more about this topic, because I was defeated in the next part of the game and I don't know what is the ending. The plot of the game is at one time in the court, then in the castle, just like in Mario.

Unfortunaly Dave is defenseless, but he is a really agile fellow. He performs well when



he jumps over the edges of the chasm or when he jumps up to the upper platforms. The obstacles that I encountered during the game are: moving blocks, flying bullets, flickering rays of lasers and the aforementioned chasm. It is great that there is no fixed time to finish a given level, so you can play without hurrying. As far as gathering points is concerned, you can get them, for example, by gathering white, moving dots or crushing blocks with your head.

I have to warn you about one thing! When you begin the game, do not push fire in any circumstances, but allow the gameto move you to the right, otherwise you will lose one life. Generally, it doesn't matter, whether you will encounter your obstacle in the middle of the level or its' end, because, either way, you will be teleported to the beginning of the level.

Before I finish the review of the game, I have to praise its' graphics. Perfectly chosen colours and thorough design cause that the graphics is clear, and what is more important, Parallax scrolling was used. The sound is not so im-



pressive, but it is also not mediocre. An enormous playability is one of the most important features of the games. Do you notice it? Only positive impressions. Soooo....Should we play it together?

▲ Screen comes from: <http://www.plus4world.com/>

DORK DAVE AND THE DIRTY TRICK

Publisher: **Misfit**
Year of publication: **2015**
Platform: **C16**

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REVIEW

RANSACK

■ Review: Komek; Translated by Michał Sroka

I've promised myself that if I ever was to review a game from the 80s, I would pick a good, but lesser known title. Does it make any sense to read for a thousand time about The Great Giana Sisters, International Karate or Test Drive? Everyone knows everything there is to know about these games, while there are lots of other games that you have never heard of.

I've stumbled upon Ransack by accident while checking a compilation my friend Wojtek gave me. As a Shoot'Em Up enthusiast

I quickly got to like the protagonist, a jumping robot that shoots hordes of enemies. I've later found out that his stabilizing systems

had been damaged. So why was he sent on a mission? It all started with eight planets of the Ryvian system that were evading paying tribute to the Democratic Planetary Council. The Council decided to send their leg-ate to negotiate with their debtors, but the

guy got eaten! That was enough! As a result, the Council sent their fleet to deal with inhabitants of the Ryvian system. However, in order to cut the costs, they agreed on sending only one slightly malfunctioning, but brave robot, which you are going to take control of!

The first planet of the Ryvian system is Elleet, which is followed by: Gountlet, Urydium, Riptoff, Santion, Frust, Boldash, Dealta. Gameplay-wise they are all the same: your goal is to destroy all ships and machines controlled by the inhabitants of Ryvian. The sheer number of enemies and the pace of gameplay make Ransack difficult. You have four lives, each containing fifteen hit points, so it's not all bad. Being a good shooter, Ransack presents the player with a few bonuses that make the game a little easier: new weapons, bombs and power ups-surprises. They are presented as squares with symbols describing what's inside. You can use





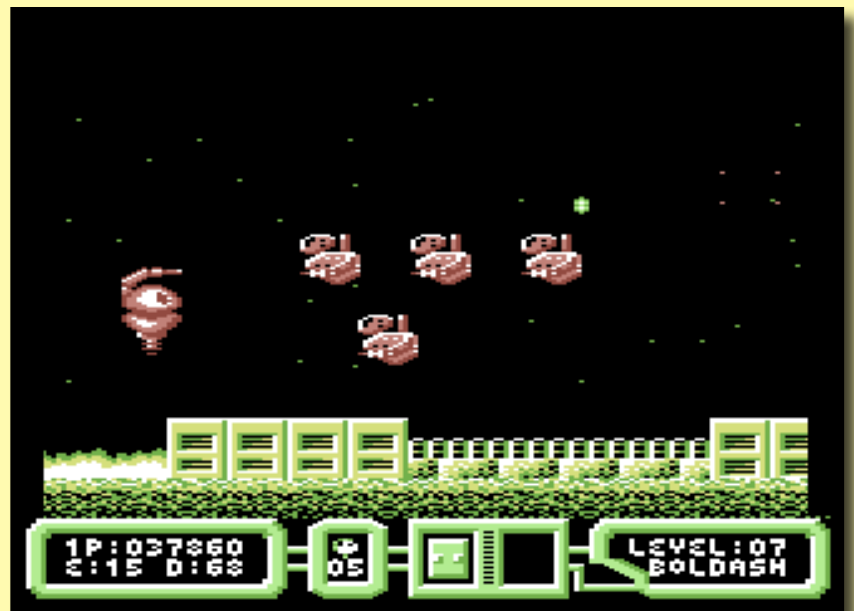
planet, there is an incredibly difficult bonus level for you to score some additional points. Each planet has a timer set to 99 at the beginning of the stage, which is shown on the left side of the screen. When it reaches zero you don't lose a life, but instead you are forced to finish the fight on your current planet.

What more can I add?

The game has pretty good

bombs and surprises whenever you desire by pressing simultaneously joy up and fire. At the bottom of the screen there a wide icon with two small windows at the middle. Right one shows your current bomb or surprise, while the left one depicts the weapon you currently wield. It's worth noting that bombs are very useful, as they can get you out of dire situations by destroying everything on the screen. During the game

I stumbled upon something neat in the "?" box – a little robot that began to shoot at the incoming enemies. Also, be mindful of what you pick up, as it is possible to replace more pow-



graphics, which is made even better by the use of parallax scrolling. Sound effects are pretty decent and suit the action quite well. The overall gameplay is pretty good, but the difficulty level can spoil the fun.

RANSACK

Publisher: **Audiogenic**

Software Ltd.

Year of publication: **1987**

Platform: **C64**



▲ Version on Atari XL/XE:

The year 2014 brought us an Atari port of Ransack. It was created for the Atari Bit-Byte User Club (ABBUC) and retains the atmosphere of the original...

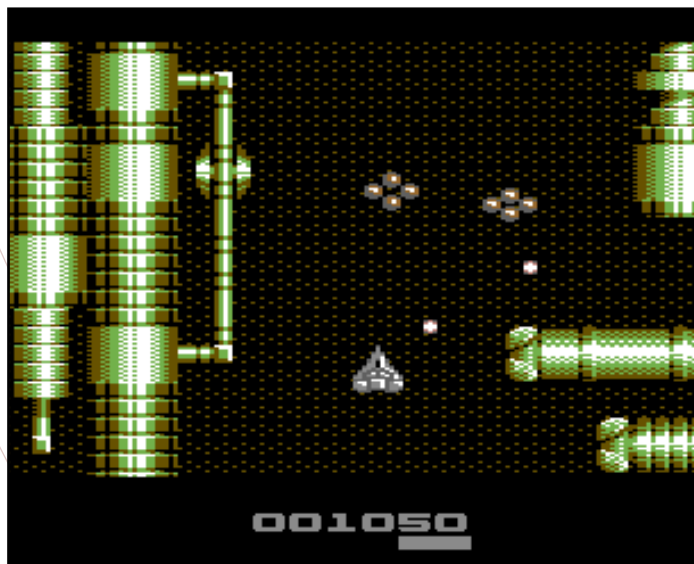
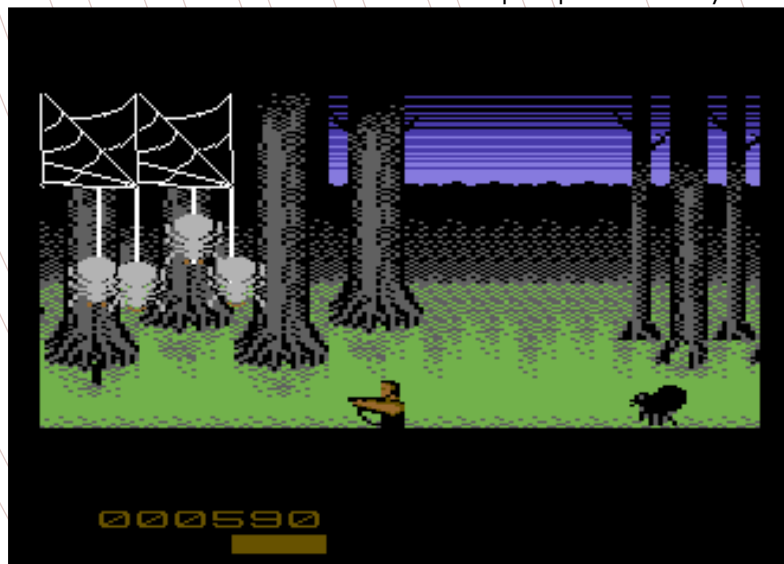
erful weapons with weaker ones. Upon completing each

TALKING HEADS

Shoot'Em-Up Construction Kit

There are persons who claim that it is a primitive instrument to create kitsch, and everything that is created with it lacks a character. There are other people who say that it

noctropolis: I have a very good opinion about *SEUCK* and I have to defend it. The main advantage of this problem



is a simple and quick method for a good game and you need only to focus to make it attractive. The opinions on the topic of games which are created in *SEUCK* are divided. We will mention the topic of C64 and Amiga games made in this program in this episode of Talking Heads. What do the editors of "K&A plus" have to say about it? Check it out!

The main advantage of this problem is considerable lack of difficulty in creating games with it, which translates into the vast amount of releases created with it.

- noctropolis

is considerable lack of difficulty in creating games with it, which translates into the vast amount of releases created with it, and the not decreasing popularity of the program. There are also authors, for which the possibilities offered by the program are sufficient and they still use it, but there are also those for which this program is the

prelude to the more serious creations (and those for which the program is the springboard to something bigger from time to time). I will not agree that it is an instrument to create kitsch. Of course, a lot of typical and boring shooters were created with the help of *SEUCK*, but there are some exceptional releases. In addition, these releases are not only shooters, as suggested by *SEUCK* acronym (however there are a lot of good shooters) but there is an important fact that some creators omit (or we can say that they mask) the limitations of the program and they create with its' help a variety of games, for instance, platform, race or adventure – like, or some other being a combination of the genres.

Komek: The truth is that a lot of games, which were created with use of this program... they caused that I spent a lot of time by the screen of the computer. I can easily mention a lot of *SEUCK* productions who have nice graphics and high playability, but I will limit myself to the most important ones. For example, for C64: *Laserhawk*, *Verde*, *Forgotten Forest*, *Evil Wizard 2*, *Dodo's Deep Doo-Doo*, *1000 Kung Fu Maniacs*, *V.I.O.S.* and for Amiga: *Intense – Sector One Reborn*, *Raid (I, II, III, IV)*, *Sky Flyer*, *Serene Trilogy*. Unfortunately, *SEUCK* has limited abilities which cause that they can create only an imitation of certain genres of games. However, this program is really good and can be used to create typical shooters.

Minimoog: I worked with *SEUCK* for a couple of years and I had an opportunity to work in it - with my group – Slavia, almost a year ago, for *SEUCK Compo 2015*. Those who

read last "K&A plus", they know it. We made two simple games: *Shamai - the return of myths* and *The Ocean Ninja*. The word "simple" is very significant for *SEUCK*. Of course, everything depends on the approach to creat-



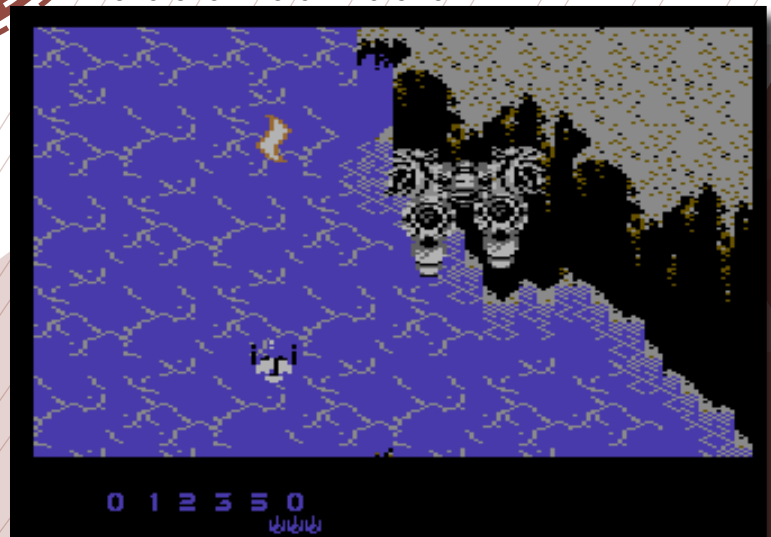
ing games, because you can make this *SEUCK* production perfect or completely make it wrong.

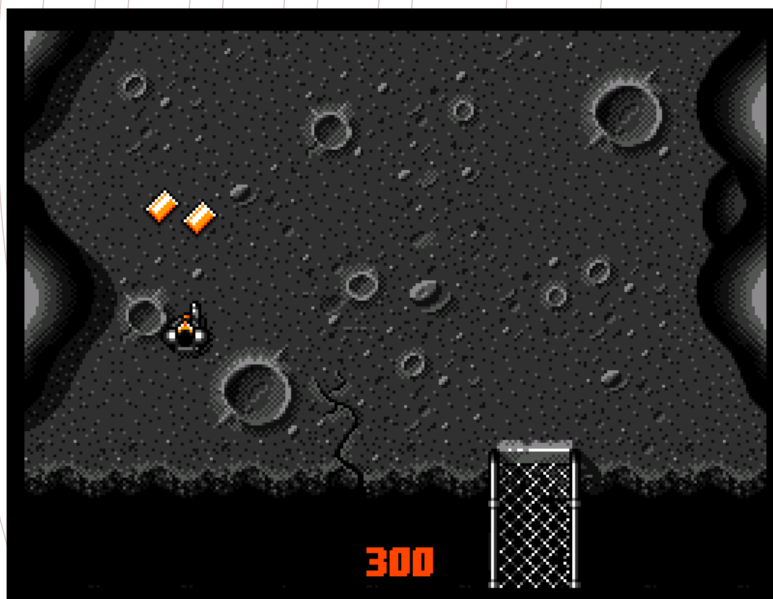
I would deny the definition of writing games with use of this program.

You do not need to have any skills or know anything about computers – the program does everything for us which in standard circumstances (assembler or even BASIC) can take a lot more time and

You do not need to have any skills or know anything about computers – the program does everything for us which in standard circumstances.

- Minimoog





bring a worse result. In the games created by way of *SEUCK* the nicest thing is the fact that you can easily recognize them. The typical sound effects, scrolling or the counter of points on the bottom of the screen reveal everything!

Bobikowoz: As a player I have mixed feelings in relation with the games created with *SEUCK*. I suspect that the

If the game is good, then, regardless of the fact with which editor the game was created, it will be good. If the author can hide the imperfections of *SEUCK*, then in my opinion, we are dealing with another category of games.

- Bobikowoz

main culprit are the games that I played. Usually, you can clearly see whether a given game was created in this editor. It is the biggest disadvantage when, once again, we play the same scenario and the only difference is the graphics. And what about the mentioned by my predecessors the exceptional games? If the game is good, then, regardless of the fact with

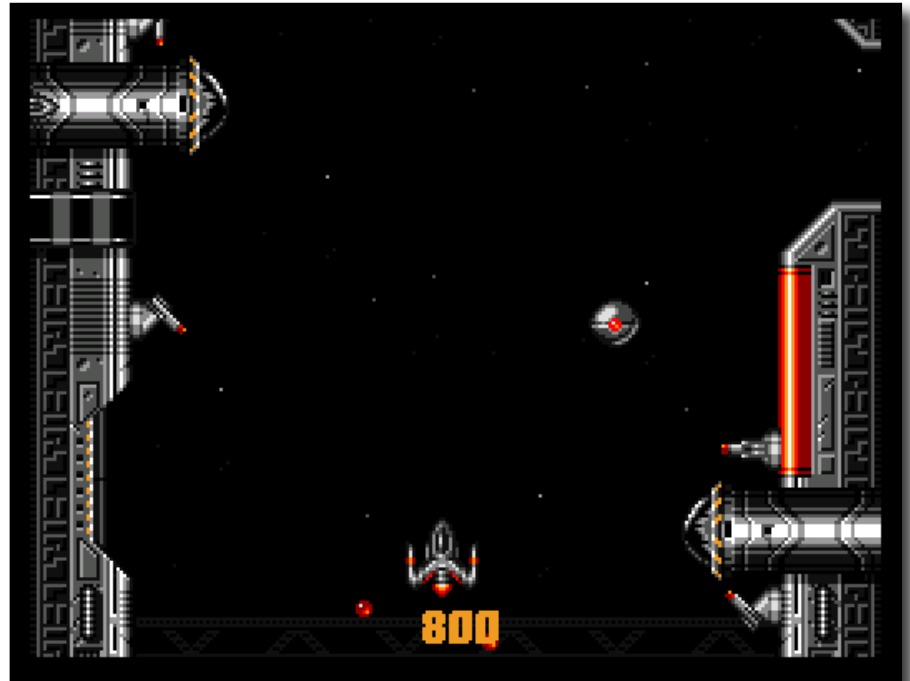
which editor the game was created, it will be good. If the author can hide the imperfections of *SEUCK*, then in my opinion, we are dealing with another category of games.

noctropolis: I would like to mention one interesting subcategory (if we can call it this way) of *SEUCK* games, the releases with an additional code. We can recognize them most often by the fact that during the credits of such game the *SEUCK* author is



separately mentioned and separately a person responsible for the so called *SEUCK* enhancements, the aforementioned additional codes. Those games very often are created in pairs: the main creator is a person experienced in making games by use of the aforementioned environment (but not necessarily a programmer), and the additions, final result is added by the coder. There can be a problem with the classification of such creations. When we look at it from one side, it is not a pure *SEUCK*, because to create something like this, you need to have concrete programming skills (or try to find help in this area). From the other side, the whole nucleus of the game is still *SEUCK* and the additions are put into something that we can call "décor". Because we can say it frankly: if the pure *SEUCK* can create a nice gameplay, sometimes it lacks something besides it. Attractive title, some kind of cut-scenes, music during the gameplay or an interesting ending. For instance, often after ending a typical *SEUCK* release, I felt unsatisfied because of its' typical, "faked" ending or even lack of it. You reach the end of a level, the opponents disappear, the hero stays on the screen with a limited area of movement and there is somewhere above a written message that says "the end" or something like this. You can feel or at least I feel it that way....that it is artificial ending and not a real ending (and some of the games simply repeat, which for me is an even worse solution). Coders' additions allow to put in this place some kind of nice, ending picture, or maybe music, a word about the whole story with congratulations. The player feels better and notices that his effort was appreciated. Yeah, the *SEUCK* extensions are a really great thing, even though it is not a pure *SEUCK* anymore.

itive about the releases which were made in this program. If someone of you didn't have anything to do with *SEUCK*, it is worth to see what the program is all about because only then we can have an honest, real opinion. Maybe you would like to create a *SEUCK* game?



Translated by **Slayerpl**

As you can see, the opinions of editors about *SEUCK* aren't that much different. They are in 90 percent pos-



Resurrection: *Syndicate*

■ Review: c00k; Translated by Tomxx & Atreus

It's year 1993. Some month ago Commodore introduces Amiga 1200, which was admittedly successful, but still influenced company's business as much as the Messerschmitt Me 262 Schwalbe impacted the German fate during World War II (though perhaps for the sake of Commodore's founder this isn't the best comparison). At around the same time British company called Bullfrog, known from its "God simulator" Populous, introduces the first title from a series called Syndicate. Similarly to Lucas and their Star Wars, at that point they obviously didn't think of a series yet.

Syndicate's plot in a nutshell is as follows: not too distant future, the world is ruled by corporations. We're managing one of them and intend to take over the influence zones of other companies. In order to achieve this goal we hire special agents who are sent on missions in teams consisting of four members.

This isn't perhaps the first tactical game ever released on Amiga, but surely it's the first one with such wide capabilities of a gameplay. The control system of LMB – move, RMB – fire, as well as the ability to split team members to

provide covering fire, was earlier introduced by Cannon Fodder; however *Syndicate* took it one step further and let the player equip each agent differently. This included the equipment and implants, which allowed the modification of both, physical aspects of our agents and the intelligence required for autonomic functioning on the field. Missions do vary in many ways: it might be as simple as killing someone or taking over an item, but sometimes the goals are more complicated, like kidnapping a person by using special item called Persuadertron.

What else distinguishes this game from other titles? Definitely game's atmosphere! Mel Gibson's fans would pee themselves in happiness! We receive a true Cyberpunk genre here, and what's also cool, the aforementioned vision of the world is presented with a brilliant quality of graphical design. First of all, it's as you can professionally say noir. As of a definition of Cyberpunk, the world must be dark and grey, sometimes decorated with psychedelic colors reflected by neon signs or multimedia billboards. All of that is present in this game and the mood is similar to the one presented in the song of internet performer who aspires to be a MMA fighter: "It's not so colorful"...

And that's not all, as we also have a deep strategic factor

here! Choosing a region to conquer is a standard choice, but the amount of taxes imposed on them and the further management of funds in order to conduct scientific research is a high added value.

All of that made me to say it officially: *Syndicate* is my favorite computer game of all times. No other game made me feel so good ;)

Unfortunately, this title already highlights the progress made by PC computers in early 90's. Couple of years earlier DOS games looked much worse than their Amiga counterparts, in this case though it's much different. The most visible difference are visual details, for example of the emergency vehicles. Amiga version had one vehicle model with light signals on top, while the PC version featured different designs of police or ambulance cars, which one could obviously steal, similarly to the later known games. The only difference was that one needed to shoot down a driver ;)

The second game of the series – *Syndicate Wars* – was released 3 years later. Due to game's features, and the fact, that Commodore Business Machine didn't exist on the market anymore, this game was not published on Amiga. This is not the reason of not mentioning this game though –



the second part was simply poor. It was announced as a great hit featuring 3D graphics which attempted to eliminate the biggest issue of part one – the impossibility of moving screen around when your troops were behind the buildings. Unfortunately it wasn't enough. I recall trying hard to play this game but it didn't intrigue me at all. The same feelings were shared by all of my friends.

Fans had to wait 16 years for another part of the series. Eventually, when the game was released they all noticed that only the title is the same. This release was placed incredibly far away for what fans were expecting for so many years: we've just received a FPP game. There are corporations and agents but the atmosphere is so different – everything's too bright there. Instead of the cyborgization we received a chip that provides us with the ability to influence enemies and let us connecting to electronic devices to pull info on our health stats. Feels good but it's not atmospheric enough. The spirit of previous era is only visible on bosses, which aren't popular enough.

Sometime later the developers that have been previously involved into the first part of the series announced: we're willing to create The New Syndicate players are waiting for! There was only one problem – they didn't have enough funds. They asked players to finance the entire project and, as expected, fans responded very enthusiastically. It resulted in collecting the entire amount needed for the development of a new game, but additionally, devs offered to place top donors in the virtual world. The main sponsor has become the main villain in game.

As promised, the new game was exactly what fans were waiting for! We received a highly developed tactical game presented in

an isometric view and it was all full of cyberpunk atmosphere. There are corporations ruling the world, objects are controlled by guards, and streets are being patrolled by police. Similarly to the original release, we also receive lots of various "toys" and cybernetic supports to play with. The only major difference is related to the team – we don't control four agents, but only a single one. The other three have different responsibilities. The game definitely offers more ambitious gameplay compared to other modern productions. It's even more ambitious than the original part :) The emphasis was put on cooperation known from various Amiga productions, like *Lost Vikings* and *Furry of the Furies*, where we command the team members equipped with different warfare and can use their hacking, medical and assassination abilities. Additionally, we don't have any strategic component of conquering and managing separate parts of the world. The game provides smaller world which looks like a city agglomeration and we're moving in it like in the urban sandbox. Money doesn't come from taxes but from hacked ATM machines, which transfer to our own account a small amount every second. Just try to leave this game on for the entire night :) There is even a plot in background, but for me personally the biggest asset of this game is the beautiful graphic design. Darkness rules over this world at all times here, and the only brightness comes from the trashy neon ads, which are indeed a very good piece of artwork. This game's cyberpunk is exactly as good as the one known from cult movies like *Blade Runner* or *Johnny Mnemonic*. A masterpiece to our eyes!

There's only one "but" – the game isn't called Syndicate but Sattelite Reign, which is due to the fact that EA currently owns the rights to this series. The second very minor disadvantage is the inability

to purchase boxed version. This is only mine subjective thing, as some other people just appreciate the convenience of buying the electronic version.

A huge success of this game was also highlighted by authors' behavior, as they didn't even an-



swer my request for a review copy and some interesting press note. It looks like people responsible for the marketing part didn't even bother to make it more famous and promote their title in a magazine like ours :) Well, I didn't count for the free version of game, but some interesting press note would be nice – I'm sure they have something prepared in advance for the press :)

Let me summarize: this game fully derives from the best movements of the original title, as well as from other games featuring sandboxing, cooperation and cyberpunk classics. It's going to provide us with hours of entertainment that we can often return to.



REVIEW

Slavia once again

■ Review: Minimoog; Translated by Karo

Some of you, dear Readers, probably remember that in May 2014 a game called Slavia saw the light of the day for the first time, when it was put as a cover-disc in "Komoda" magazine (one of the magazines that fused into K&A later). I consider this date as the beginning of activity of a group under the same name – Slavia.

And now we come to you again, with a game *Slavia 2*! The number 2 in the title has many meanings. It's our second text game, for two players, the second part of *Slavia* that was created two years

ago! A lot of twos, right?

Our new production also takes place in early Medieval, at the beginning of Piast dynasty (the first historical dynasty of Polish kings).

You can choose to play with one of the four,

authentic Slavic tribes – Polans, Moravians, Pomeranians and Drevlans. Each of them has their own statistics, which can of course be upgraded. We have a whole day to buy the militia and special items improving our stats and to gather and exchange supplies necessary to buy them. When the clock strikes 10 p.m. – the battle starts!

So, what's new?

As I mentioned before – it's a game for two players. *Slavia 2* enables you to play even when you are far away from each other and one thing that makes it significantly easier it... the Internet. The programme uses a special method of counting and receiving codes – it's enough to write them to each other in any chat and your Commies will connect! But beware! You have to be very precise when you write down codes – once in, it cannot be corrected!

In this part of the game moving around the world is not as complex as it was before. There is no map but you can still go to the forest or lake. Those places will be very useful as they are the source of fish, pelts and meat that we can sell.

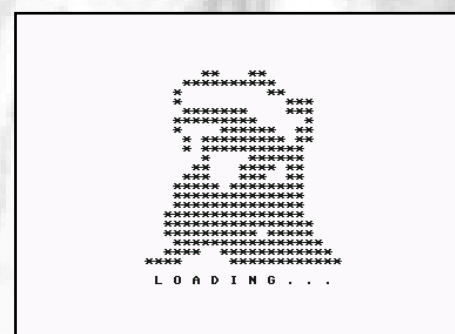
In *Slavia 2* the battle is divided into two parts – army battle and hand to hand combat. In the first part we need to place our militia (warriors, shielders and bowmen) skilfully and strategically. Their amount influences attack, defence – dealing and resisting damage. If one army runs out or its energy drops to 0 – we enter the second part of the fight. First, the remaining troops and energy are trans-



ferred to the heroes' stats. The only attack left is to attack until you die or surrender!

Slavia was an adventure game, *Slavia 2* is a strategic one. Gathering a right number of militia, managing the time intended for preparing to battle and skilful controlling of the troops in a fight, demands wise risk-taking and creating good strategies. A battle that seems won, can yet turn out to be lost!

I know I might seem prejudiced because I praise my own game but I really think it's worth to play *Slavia 2*. It's a result of 6 months' worth of difficult work but the outcome is really nice and the game is a good way to, let's say, spend an enjoyable half an hour with your buddy.





My XU1541 adventure

■ Review: JargoV; Translated by Atreus & Tomxx

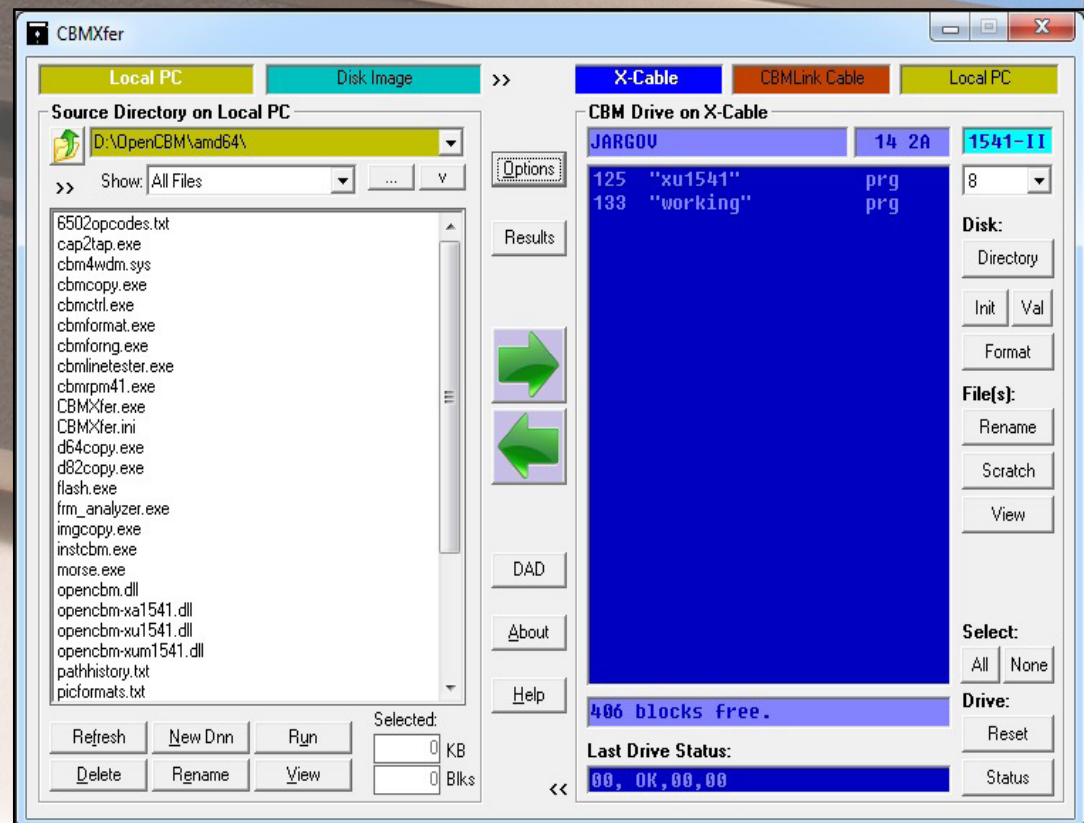
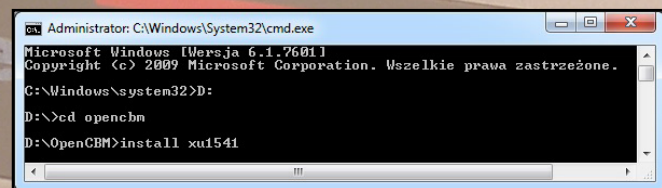
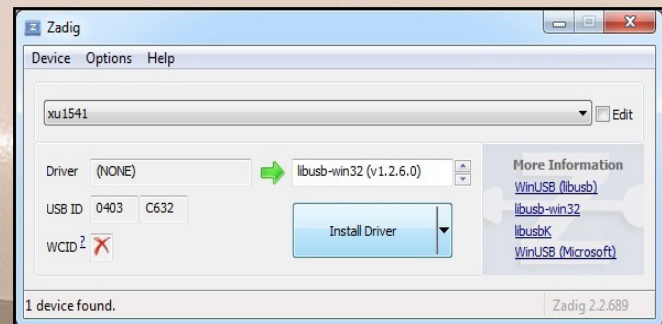
Since Commodore demoscene started showing up on internet almost every user faces the problem of data transfer between PC and C64. Finally I also started to get trapped into this inconvenience. With such wide access to games and demoscene products we shouldn't really continue running the apps on the emulator, right? It's time to move on with real hardware!

First solution was to build a simple cable XE+XM1541. Everything was working like it should, but cable was designed for using vintage parallel port LPT and finding this one on modern computers might be a miracle. My old machine, which was strictly suited for this process, slowly finished its life with multiple OS hang ups, even with freshly installed operating system...

I found a solution for this situation which is a popular interface XU1541: <http://spiro.trikaliotis.net/xu1541>

I've looked on PCB of this project: it's built on 2 PCB layers, which might be hard to build for people who didn't do that before. When I was building this interface I've decided to design simpler version called Mini XU1541. Comparing to the original projects it doesn't demand deep technical skills in soldering and creating a PCB, so it's a nice solution for wider audience :) I quickly "slimmed" schematic, designed new PCB, etched plate and soldered all pieces together.

Unfortunately, things were going wrong all the time. Drivers with OpenCBM software provided on this website didn't want to operate on 64-bit version of Windows 7. So I abandoned the entire project and got back to it only some time later. I've decided to describe the way of installing this interface under 64-bit Windows 7 OS, even though this description is provided with drivers. I feel it might be little bit too



complicated and incomprehensible for the basic use of XU1541.

1. PA primary requirement are the drivers bundled with OpenCBM software, but you need to download them in Alpha/Beta version!

<http://spiro.trikaliotis.net/opencbm-alpha>

As I write this article the file is described as Beta 0.4.99.98. Download and unpack the files.

2. We're booting up our PC with disabled Driver Signing check and with connected XU1541 interface.

3. Run Zadig program with administrator rights.

<http://zadig.akeo.ie/> We're following up with installing libusb-win32 drivers.

4. Run CMD.EXE as administrator and go to OpenCBM folder. Run install xu1541.

5. For higher productivity we can also install GUI for OpenCBM. I recommend CB-MXfer.

<http://www.6502.org/users/sigray/software/cbmxf/cbmxf.html>

Unpack the archive to the appropriate folder within OpenCBM hierarchy:
amd64 - for 64-bit OS
i386 - for 32-bit OS

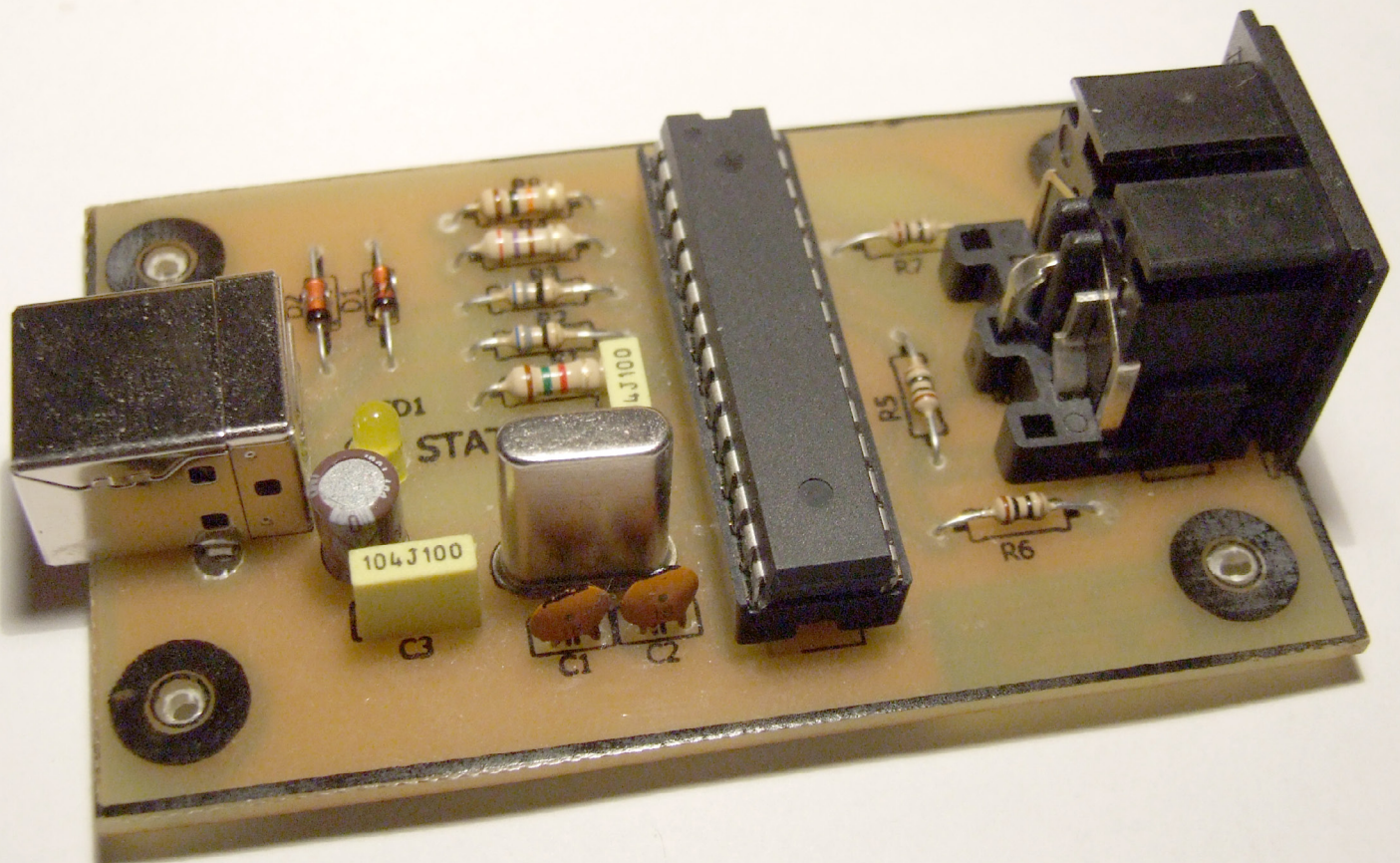
6. Run CBMXfer.exe and choose X-Cable interface in Settings.

After all these operations are performed we're able to smoothly transfer data between C64 and PC! I don't have to say on how comfortable this solution is right now ;)

XU1541 in basic setup, without JiffyDOS isn't a speed demon, but the most important thing is it's working without any problem.

Of course I'm adding schematic and PCB for a mini version: https://www.dropbox.com/sh/72ast2jon2uipej/AAAqHnNrJZ8BXtJxN-Nwl_ga?dl=0

Process of writing firmware is the same like in the original version. I'd only slightly modified the hardware.



Aviator



■ Review: Neurocide; Translated by Slayerpl

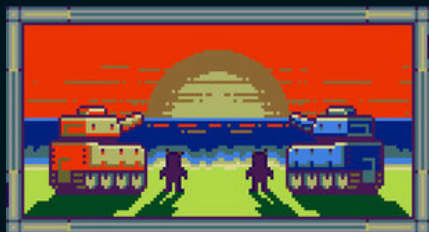
The box was huge. I was sure that there was something inside it which I could plug into my C64. I couldn't stand the pressure, so I started unwrapping the package. With my claws and teeth I opened the decorative wrapper. Oh yeah! My hunch was right.

There was a writing "Quick-Shot" on the box which erased my doubts. I wanted more. It was *Aviator 1*. Huge game controller. Nowadays it is difficult for me to say whether it was more of a steering wheel or the space ship flight control system. When you are 12 years old, it may seem that you received a best gift ever that you could imagine for Christmas.

You look at this wonder and you cannot be wrong. It is a work of art, an invention of a talented engineer. You can imagine yourself flying because of it, just like the kids from the advertisements. Colorful strips whirl around you and you fly towards sky, you shoot at the aliens and then you transform into F18 and you bombard Saddam.

And then....you plug it in. The





TANKS FURRY

Sometime in early January I accidentally came across a trailer for a new Amiga game. Its concept together with high quality visuals and catchy music got me hooked – as a dedicated World of Tanks fan, a new tank-themed game was for me personally quite a thing! Once the trailer revealed a copy of the Polish Amiga Magazine dating back to November 1994 I was even more intrigued – shall steel Polish monsters once again roll across the classic Amiga platform? It previously happened in 1995 when Mirage released their “Pole Walki” (The Battlefield) game.

Tanks Furry was first presented to the audience during the 2015 Retro-komp event, walking away with a solid second place in the retro GameDev category. It's developed by Project R3D – a new group from the Polish Amiga Portal, where the game was initially discussed on a dedicated forum thread.

TF is a multi-directional shooter played on a single screen and at first glance resembles the classic Battle City from Namco. The gameplay is fast and intuitive, with relatively diverse maps and a primary goal to, what else, destroy all enemies while keeping your home base

protected. In single player mode we're offered 42 levels and the battlefield plot takes us through desert, forest and urban landscapes. During each mission you fight against enemy forces consisting of armored vehicles, light, heavy and super-heavy tanks, up to the ultra-modern "wunder-tanks". The PvP and Co-Op modes for up to 4 players (with two joysticks and keyboard as controllers) are a huge boon to the games longevity. The multiplayer mode has some serious Bomberman potential and at some point could be picked up as another Amiga party game. With beer in one hand there is nothing cooler

than blasting your buddy between the eyes ;)

TF's audiovisuals don't disappoint. With hand-drawn graphics, modelled on the GameBoy's Advance Wars, it's pleasant to look at. We're actually dealing with two substrate layers, so that vehicles pass both under and over the elements of the landscape. Combine that with 5-frame animation of the environment and it helps to give the effect of a "living" world.

As for the music: the 2 tunes are only present in the trailer and intro (make sure to watch it to solve the "furry"-title mystery) and were both created by Simone Bernacchia, known within Amiga scene as JMD. During the game itself you will only hear simple sound effects, pretty much similarly to the old good Cannon Fodder. Last thing worth mentioning are hardware requirements: the game can be played on any traditional Amiga with at least 020 CPU and 1MB of RAM. It's worth mentioning that the AGA chipset is not required to play.

▼ Screenshot from the official trailer of Tanks Furry, source: YouTube.com





Another crowd pleaser is the way the game is being distributed. The digital version is available for free on Aminet servers, but the crew has prepared an impressive boxed version, which is a nice treat for collectors! The main data storage used in boxed version is a CD (it contains, among other files, the adf floppy image format), although you can request a physical floppy for small additional fee. This option was introduced separately, because the creators were concerned about the availability of floppy disks in case large number of orders would be placed. The box also includes:

- A color-printed manual in 2 languages
- Poster
- Fridge magnet
- Stickers, including those for floppy disks.

The CD is not bootable on CD32, as using the available applications for creating it might violate software copyright, according to the developers. Distribution obviously is not focused on the financial income (the cost of a boxed version is less than 10 euro, which is significantly less than other currently published retro games). It's worth noting that the availability of a digital version was slightly delayed, because of Project R3D's desire to honor people that went for the box purchase.

TF is a good yet not perfect game. It's certainly a breath of fresh air on the Amiga market, although personally I'll be cheering for devs to still put a little bit more effort into game's design. The AI system requires some additional work, as the enemy vehicles drive randomly and as such are not of a threat to the human player. AI doesn't prioritize our HQ in their attacks, which consider a shortcoming. Also, the game mechanics don't incorporate the terrain aspect into a unit's movement stats. Sands, bushes or building debris seem to be perfect for slowing down or even temporary stopping vehicle's movement and a river could become passable if only there were some movable environment elements that we could use. With such changes the gameplay would definitely gain some depth. The co-op's friendly fire could also use some revision, as right now shooting your partner has no effect on the available lives.

Despite several shortcomings Tanks Furry is definitely worth your time and the PvP mode may become a new hit of the Amiga party season! Most importantly, however, I feel we should send our kudos to the devs for designing, creating and distributing a fully playable game for a retro platform. The team from Project R3D should be proud of themselves. I hope that the orders, reception and honest reviews

will give them a positive kick for future projects and that we're all going to enjoy their future products.

TANKS FURRY

Developer: **Project R3D**
Year of publication: **2016**
Platform: **Amiga 68k**



“*The multiplayer mode has some serious Bomberman potential and at some point could be picked up as another Amiga party game. With beer in one hand there is nothing cooler than blasting your buddy between the eyes ;)*



GameDev Story: Tanks Furry *Koyot1222 & Juen*

■ Interview and Translation by: Tomxx



Krzysiek Matys (Koyot1222, on the left) and Paweł Nowak (Juen, on the right) from Project R3D speak with us about the concept, inspiration, working style and the distribution model of their first very own release for classic Amiga – the game Tanks Furry.

Tomxx: Project R3D most likely doesn't sound familiar to our readers, please introduce yourself and tell us more about your roles in the Tanks Furry project.

Koyot1222: We're a group formed around our developer, Juen. He has created fast code responsible for managing all movable and static objects in game. The entire code base was written relatively quickly, but it took us some time to QA and fix the issues. I was personally responsible for the entire graphics layer and can honestly say that my work was heavily inspired by various titles from Nintendo. It wasn't easy to follow this guideline, as they hire multiple graphic artists per project and their work quality is incredibly high. I was able though to create my own style and I'm very happy with the final results. Doomer delivered sound effects and JMD (hooked up after watching our first TF demo) promised to compose some music. We'd also like to express our appreciation to Aszu, who helped out in the final development sprint with in-game texts proof-

reading and game manual translations.

How did you guys meet?

Koyot1222: For some time already I wanted to broaden my artistic skillset. I have started a forum thread called "Piksele/piksele" on PPA.pl, which was later used for various graphical concepts and ideas. I ultimately aimed to deliver a complete set of game visuals. Juen visited my thread and contacted me directly about his new game concept. This is how our initial idea for a new platformer was born, and since then we use the R3D brand.

Juen: I think we achieved a perfectly matched team! Koyot is similarly enthusiastic to myself and we managed to instantly get down to business. I code for most part of my life and I like to do it instantly, while Koyot is such a good graphic designer that it sometimes only takes him an hour to deliver large chunks of graphics together with animation layers. It's an ideal cooperation and I only regret that with this broad knowledge we currently possess we haven't

met some time ago.

When was the tank-themed arcade game idea originally born?

Koyot1222: Few months before the Retrokomp 2015 GameDev competition we realized we won't be able to complete the initial R3D project. Our demos were totally not of acceptable quality. We brainstormed and focused on finding something simpler, yet also attractive. We initially thought of something that would mechanically refer to Bomberman, but eventually decided to go for NES' Battle City clone. It wasn't about another game port; we intended to create a brand new game based on classic 16-bit standards.

Juen: Let me only add, that we always wanted to make our own game based on Battle City idea. As soon as we both brainstormed, there wasn't anything else we were willing to go for instead.

Did you have any previous GameDev experience? How long was the game in development? I assume TF wasn't



your main occupation at that time...

Koyot1222: The entire project took some months to complete. We only worked in our spare time and so it went slowly but steadily forward. I had multiple concepts in my head and it took me some time to finally decide on the ultimate form of visuals. We obviously discussed multiple ideas, lots of changes were introduced on the fly and some parts have been permanently removed from the final version. I don't really have much of experience in Game-Dev, as I have only worked on some simple 3D objects in the past. Simultaneously to Tanks Furry I also worked on another game – Fruit'Y developed by Retroguru group. Juen has quite extensive demoscene experience which is extremely powerful knowledge in game development.

Juen: I was personally relatively busy at that time and the competition version was all created within 2 weeks (I worked 1 or 2 hours per day). I then left for holidays and didn't make it on time to personally visit the competition in Cracow. If I didn't have this break I'd probably be enough motivated to finish the entire game for that event. We finally had some more time for the development and I'm sure our current version is much better than the competition prototype.

What has inspired you? Did you incorporate any player feedback?

Koyot1222: Generally speaking

I'm a huge fan of Nintendo's game graphics. For my TF works I have analyzed Battle City and Advance Wars, as well as The Legends of Zelda series. I aimed to pick up some details to introduce into my own work. The Nintendo inspiration is easily noticeable.

Juen: We used our own friends for QA and quickly improved the game play source code. I believe I was the main critic and major supporter of Koyot's works, and he acted in the same way to me. This has allowed us to share instant feedback about positive and negative parts of our progress.

Are you going to continue working on TF after the game is published? Can we still expect to see some further improvements and content updates?

Koyot1222: We are currently waiting for critical response to see whether the release was successful. Initially we thought about several improvements in gameplay and perhaps about adding new content. But we also realized, that it'd be fun to be able to create a new version of TF in some time. You know, we have removed some ideas from this version and we believe it might make a difference for the sequel.

Juen: Certainly we'd work on TF if updates are necessary, but we don't want to only be involved in a single title. We're thinking of TF2, but there is a chance it will be a totally different game than TF. In addition to the classic TF there is also a special version compiled for the console IndieGo

– we have included additional 15 maps for Deathmatch, which makes a total of 30 random maps in this mode.

Can one launch TF on a basic 68k CPU? You earlier mentioned something about a special runtime argument...

Juen: The game requires calculation power delivered by 020 and it's in fact the only important requirement. The game can indeed be run on the 000, but because of really slow speed (50-60% compared to 020) we have locked this option up. The parameter was only created for testing purposes (mc68k clones and ACA).

“ I'm a huge fan of Nintendo's game graphics. For my TF works I have analyzed Battle City and Advance Wars, as well as The Legends of Zelda series.

Let's talk about the distribution. When did you first think about boxed version release?

Koyot1222: We initially only wanted to complete the digital version of the game. On the other hand, Juen works with print and production on a daily basis, so it was rather a low hanging fruit for us to complete.

Juen: I think I was certain that one of our games must be released as a boxed edition, it was my own desire.

Who worked with external vendors and dealt with DTP, print, gadgets production, etc?

(K) I felt responsible for the graphics from start to the end: I prepared a basic layout,



which was afterwards used for the box cover, manual and prints. Juen patiently prepared everything for production.

Juen: We partnered up with Amiga.net.pl who became our official distributor. They also supported and collected orders from both Poland and all other countries worldwide. I'd like to express my appreciation for their great work and I hope our cooperation will continue in the future. In contrast, the official publisher of the game is CDLabel, which is the company I manage for last 6 years. It combines the profession of information technology (especially software development) with printing, reproduction and now also publishing :) Working this way allowed us to create, release, publish and distribute a 100% legal new Polish game for Amiga.

What was the most difficult thing to overcome in releasing boxed version?

Koyot1222: We attentively discussed our final layout of the box artwork and carefully worked on readable manuals, which wasn't an easy task. A few days before the release it turned out, that the warehouse doesn't have certain amount of "magnetic paper", which also slowed us down a bit.

Juen: I doubt that anyone ever realized that the magnet is slightly smaller than previously announced. We wanted to release on time as promised to the community, and that's why we decided to go for that small change, even though the supply of magnetic paper was just about to be delivered. We've got enough of delays of recent Amiga products, so

it was important to keep up to the original release day.

Are you satisfied with the number of pre-orders? Where do they come from?

Koyot1222: We expected a few dozen of orders and there were over 200 submitted! We obviously didn't expect such a great response. This is due to people willing to distribute info about our game on the internet and this translates into multiple orders from abroad. We hope that the game will be popular and it will fulfill players' expectations. It would be nice to once see a tournament and players fighting hard for a victory in our very own game.

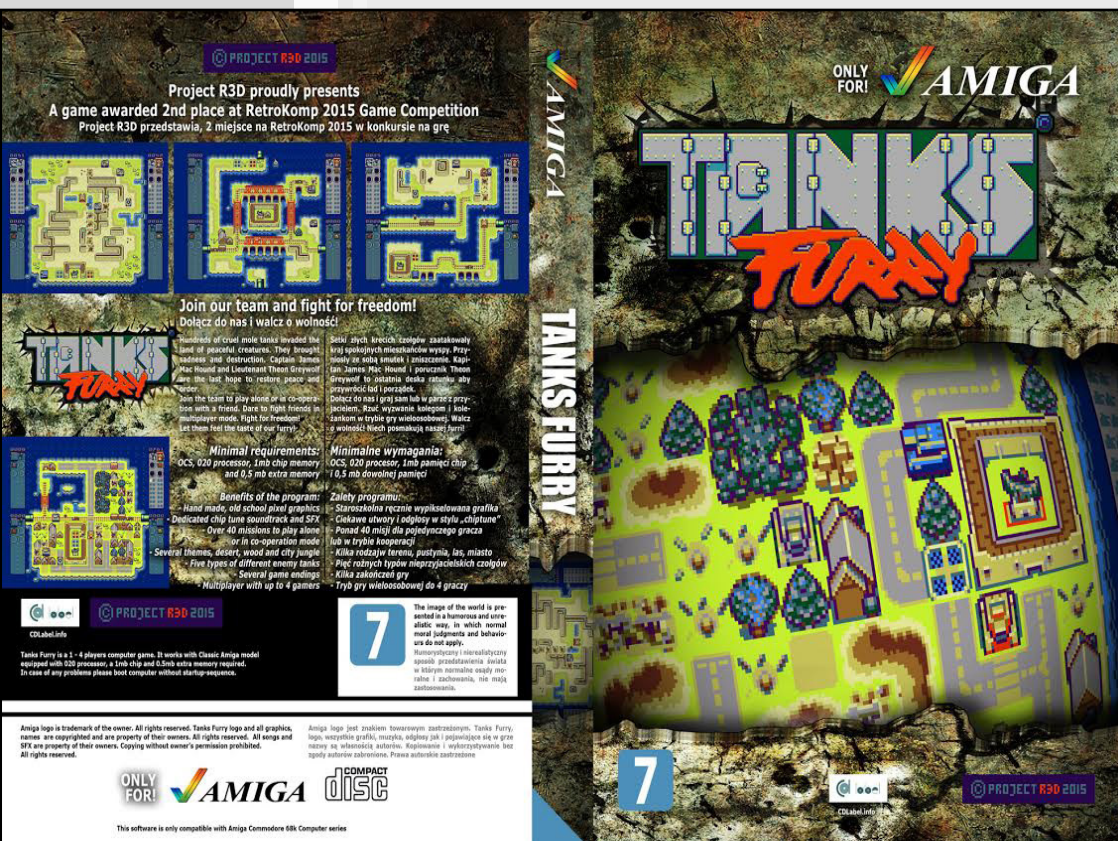
Juen: I do not know the exact stats, but we know that the orders were submitted from all around the world. The amount of purchases is very satisfactory, especially since it was a preorder. I hope that the numbers will grow further once the game is available for a free download.

Isn't the price too low though? Why was it set to that certain price level?

Koyot1222: It's hard to measure such a niche product. In an era of popular Amiga "rarities" the price may seem low. In relation to the new games the price can also be considered as high. It's hard to average. You know, we don't work for any pro game developer, neither have we pay our bills out of the profits. We have allowed ourselves to this kind of small gift for the players.

Juen: Abroad, this price surely

▼ English box artwork of Tanks Furry for Amiga.





must seem ridiculously low, but we live in Poland, so the price is somewhat matched to suit Polish players. If someone is willing to help us even more we would be happy if one also purchased our future projects. The prices should also be relatively low, so people won't be stuck in the dilemma to take or not to take it :)

Is the TF your first ever completed game? What are your further plans?

Koyot1222: It's the first one completed, but we're actively working on several other projects. We would like to make our games fun and enjoyable for multiple players at the same time. I still remember the Amiga 500 days at my cousin's place where we both "tortured" joysticks in our never-ending battles. These are nice and vivid memories, but unfortunately this was ended up with the modern technology.

Juen: Interestingly, this is not the first game we worked on, but it turned out to be the first one we ever released. This was mainly due to the fact that the game development could have been completed in a simple way, without creating any huge plot, hundreds of dialogue lines and changeable world economy system. It is a bit like with the tabletop games – you can do a super playable game, but someone will eventually find out that there is a simple way granting victory each time. Such games have to be tested, tested and tested once again, and lots of things have to be adjusted all over again. We didn't have

such a problem with arcade game and hence the decision to completing this project as first. Also, we wanted to release something quickly and refrain from only talking about it.

We noticed another R3D game that was sneak-peaked on Amiga forums, which resembled classic River Raid. Will it be a separate title or an addition to the TF?

Koyot1222: For some time already we planned on making a cool shooter and finally decided to go for River Raid. Similarly to TF and Battle City, we wanted it to be our own game that keeps the spirit of the classics. Obviously we can't avoid all the similarities; and from the technical point of view it's going to use similar graphical solutions, including the basic building blocks of 16x16 pixels. But the game's mechanics will be completely different.

Juen: We all agree that River Raid, similarly to the Battle City, is a great game. Old games are not our only idea inspirations, but creating new product on River Raid's fundamentals is still very tempting. It is worth to take on it, especially that it's a hermetic project that would be fairly easy to complete.

What does it feel like to commercially release a game on a niche system? Apart of classic Amiga are you guys interested in other retro platforms?

Koyot1222: Personally, it's a great and very positive adventure. I had previously

dreamed about creating at least a single game for a retro platform. Nowadays, a very positive feedback motivates me to continue my work, especially that I love the retro scene. To the dismay of my wife, I'm still a big fan of Super Nintendo, Gameboy Classic, Sega Mega Drive and Nintendo 64. I even managed to infect my eldest son with the retro gaming. He mostly likes to play modern games, but playing the game his daddy has developed is a bit of different story.

“Among other systems I considered small Atari and C64. Fortunately, I have ultimately decided that Amiga is a part of my life and I should devote my time to her.”

Juen: It feels amazing, especially that this is the Amiga. Even before meeting Koyot I was considering various retro platforms to choose for a new game. Among other systems I considered small Atari and C64. Fortunately, I have ultimately decided that Amiga is a part of my life and I should devote my time to her :) It was nice to come back to Assembler 68k after so many years – I always loved to code and programming is also my daily work. As of a hobby I'm involved into most retro platforms which is reflected in my collection (list available on <http://szajb.us>). We do not exclude the possibility to release a game to other systems, but I assume the time will tell...

Thanks for your time and good luck in your future projects!



Motörhead, Tribute or Face Slap for Lemmie Kilmister?

■ Review & Translated: Petrichor

The end of 2015 was a pretty sad time for all the meatheads around the world. On December 28, Lemmy Kilmister, the founder and frontman of the metal band Motörhead left this cruel world. His personality was so colourful and strong, that in addition to the appearance on the music scene, he could also be seen on the screens of our TVs, but also on... our computer screens.

Let's take a closer look into the game in which this charismatic singer is a main hero. I am sure that majority of fans

It happened because of the small development studio *Kaitsu Software*, they were so small that they actually released only one

game in their whole history - *Motörhead*. You may not know this title, as the game went away rather unnoticed and the text below will tell you why it happened this way.

Motörhead is a beat-em-up type of game that we could see and play

mie. He is in a bit of a pickle, apparently just before band's gig, someone has kidnapped the rest of his band! Lemmie is taking things into his own hands! He grabs a Jack Daniels' into one hand and a guitar in the other and he rushes to the city to save his buddies. That's all when it comes to the story line - yup, it's pretty simple. Main hero needs to run through several different levels to get the band back, each level of the game refers to the different style of music. We will be running with the Johnny Cash wannabies on the country music level, we will be tripping with the LSD pumped guys from Berlin's Love Parade on Rave level, we will also beat some crap out of the Karaoke singers in Little China level. Additionally, we will meet some punks and goths on their respective stages in the game. Opponents on each stage of the game appear in three different variations, and they all will try to cross our plans and to stop us in rescuing our pals. All the enemies we will be facing on our adventure for some reason stuffed their pockets with a variety of useful junk. Upon dying they drop some items, like cans of beer, whiskey, Motörhead emblems and other strange stuff. Thanks to them, we can get some extra

may remember Lemmie from a relatively new game called *Brutal Legend* in which he gave voice and image to one of the characters, but the truth is that hardly anyone remembers that Lemmie appeared in video games much earlier - in 1992.

in the good old arcades. Our hero moves into the right all the time, bumping into more and more enemies. If you spent hours playing *Double Dragon*, you would feel at home. Of course, player steps into the shoes of the *Motörhead* frontman - Lem-





life points, or charge a special weapon that wreaks havoc on the screen and annihilates all the bad guys. At the end of each level there will be one of the band members waiting for us. Once we rescue him, we get on the motorbike and drive into the next level, collecting some useful items on the way that will strengthen us in the next stage. At the end the trip there is an extra step where we take part in some mini-games. They differ on each level, for example: we may play tapper, where we will have to grab as many beers as possible, or we will have to order taxis for the groupies.

That is the *Motörhead* in a nutshell. Simple and repetitive as hell! ... each level is the same, where the only difference you can see is the background and enemies appearance. In-game music as you can imagine is full of metal sounds and good guitar riffs. As for the graphics, *Motörhead* looks ok, all the characters are bit out of proportion and that gives them this caricature

look – which is pretty ok and works well with the game; all the levels are well designed and it is pretty easy to guess, what music style they represent. But, the graphic is not enough to make a good game. Sadly, I have to admit that *Motörhead* is a bad game. There is nothing special in the game that would keep me playing. If you love the band and if you are mega-fans of *Motörhead*, play it, others can skip this title.

Unless you want to make a tribute to Lemmy - then play the game and listen to *The Ace of Spades*. But in all honesty, Lemmie probably would welcome more of the latter.

Motörhead

Publisher: **Kaitsu Software**
Year of publication: **1992**
Platform: **Amiga**

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Review & Translated: Petrichor

Lemmings

Who would have thought, that it has been 25 years since we met these funny green-hair creatures on the screens of our Amiga computers.

Let's start with the question: What the Lemmings about? The aim of the game is to bring to the exit a group of titled Lemmings - small creatures dressed up in blue uniforms and wearing green (and bouncy) forelocks. Player's task is to command these small creatures

various obstacles. The player's task is to assign Lemmings one respective task / skill from the list of available ones for each level. For example, you can tell a Lemming to start digging through the wall, climb, or build the bridge (you can even sacrifice a creature and blow it up in the air). Of course - the further we go into the forest, the harder it gets, the number of available skills become limited or partially disabled, the obstacles are more and more difficult, or player may have less time to bring Lemmings into the safety. As you can see, the principles of the game are quite simple and they probably made this series so popular.

Let's walk down the memory

1999) and published by Psygnosis in 1991 on Amiga and Atari ST computers. The game was written by two developers: David Jones and Mike Dailly. Both gents came up with the idea of the game in August 1989, when the first of them experimented with simple animations in Deluxe Paint software while working on a game called *Walker* (awesome game btw). It turned out that he created a puppet animation that could be looped infinitely - seeing this animation, one of the DMA Design employees said: "It is a great game material". Immediately after that, the guys in the studio came up with the game title - *Lemmings*. That's how the simple idea led to the birth of Lemmings. One *The Lemmings Story* an interesting read about history of Lemmings, one of the devs said that, working on the game was super fun and that level creation was one of these things he remembers very well. As all levels were created with the software with the user interface similar to the one from Deluxe Paint program, all employees in the studio could create their own levels as majority of them had some working knowledge of the software. This resulted in never-ending competition between the members of the studio to create more and more difficult levels, and to invent newer and more efficient ways

and to bring them safely to the exit. Lemmings as you would expect from them, do not really know what they are doing and where they are going, so when they hit an obstacle, they turn on their heel and move into op-

In 2004 "Retro Gamer" listed Lemmings on the 21 place on their rating of the best games of all time.



posite direction. So our task is to direct them and tell them what to do. The game is divided into separate levels and on each level the way to the exit is full of

lane. The first game in the series *Lemmings* was created by Scotland based studio called "DMA Designs" (yes! The same ones that created the GTA series in



to finish each level. That's the beauty of the game - each level could be finished in several different ways. That's how the long life of the series started. *Oh no! More Lemmings*

From 1991 until 2005 the franchise grew into 9 different titles. Some less, the other more popular.

Of course, as you can imagine the very first game became the most popular of the series. *Next Generation* magazine rated it as eighth of the best games of all time, "Amstrad Action" gave the game one of the highest ratings in the history of the magazine. Last but not least, in 2004 "Retro Gamer" listed *Lemmings* on the 21 place on their rating of the best games of all time. The popularity of the game can also be seen in the fact that it has sold a circulation of 15 million copies, that's the enormous amount for a game from the early 90's!

The series continued all the principles of the very first title in the sequel called *Lemmings 2: The Tribes*, which was quite well received, but never gained such popularity as the first game. In the year 1994-1995 on the Amigas with AGA chipsets we could play *All New World of Lemmings* game (in America the games has been released under the name *The Lemmings Chronicles*), the game held all the basics of the predecessors, but it was last in the series that kept the gameplay unchanged. After this game, the series began to depart from initial ideas and mechanics, changing the type of game to more arcade (as it happened in *Lemmings Paintball*), or moving into very popular 3D environment that

was super popular back in the days (*Lemmings 3D*).

The truth is that none of the sequels could match the popularity of the very first *Lemmings* and its direct expansions. This refers to the *Oh, no! More Lemmings* and *Holiday Lemmings*, which, despite the fact that were advertised as expansions for the first game, has been sold as stand alone products. Unfortunately, over the time series began to lose on its popularity, and more and more bizarre variations of the game started to appear, for example *Lemmings Revolution*. In 2005, the beloved small greenhaired creatures had one more chance to get resurrected with the reboot of



time they organize some parades and gatherings, during which they walk on the streets disguised as Lemmings. Moreover, the authorities of the city of Dundee in Scotland, the home city of the developers, have build a monument to honour the creators, giving lemmings the eternal glory. Although I'm sure that fans of the series do not need sculptures and statues to look at those greenhair lads with nostalgia.



the series for Sony PSP handheld console. Unfortunately, since the well received PSP launch of the game, nothing new was released under the *Lemmings* brand. Luckily, fans never forgot about Lemmings! From time to

Lemmings

Publisher: **Psygnosis**
Year of publication: 1991
Platform: **Amiga**

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SID Adventures:

Jammer

■ Interview by: GeoAnas; Proofreading: Tomxx



Kamil Wolnikowski – better recognized among C64 demosceners as Jammer – is a gifted Polish SID musician who also works with modern platforms producing audio for games, mostly mobile productions. Jammer started his SID adventure in 1993 but joined the demoscene around 2001 and since then is an active member of quite a few groups (well known of some demos released by Samar Productions).

GeoAnas: You've been an active scener for quite a long time now. What is the Commodore 64's mystic element that attracted you to start creating and get involved into C64 demo scene?

Jammer: C64 is one of the most important elements of my childhood. While other kids were running around the bushes and playing soccer, I was writing ridiculous BASIC games and trying to squeeze my first sounds out of Voicetracker 4 (with rather pitiful outcome that you might witness taking a plunge into my HVSC oldies dir). In general, I started my lengthy C64 adventure being stubborn and awkward 8yo kid, while first SID attempts came out two years later - which is more or less 1993.

In the meantime, I was devouring every release of Polish "Commodore & Amiga" magazine and building initial idea of other C64 geeks and demoscene gathered around. I realized there are meetings, competitions and stuff but I had no guts to get any scene contact at that time. Still,

I don't regret it at all - I might say I came across scene in the right period (2001/2002), which strangely enough coincided with me turning adult, not to mention I didn't have to feel ashamed of my attempts anymore (at least not that much).

It was initially all about good old love from the childhood, but has turned into completely different point. My naive and unconditional passion towards the beloved platform changed into some kind of masochism and pleasure of squeezing the most advanced content possible out of very limited hardware. That's the biggest driving factor nowadays, I guess. SID is in fact very handy synthesizer that aged really well and still can surprise me and the others as well.

The very scene turned out a bunch of cocky yet awesome, passionate and dedicated guys that I quickly fell in love with and I have to say it's really heartwarming experience to know that there are more no-lives out there, sharing your passion (wink, wink) and having as much fun

as you do. I'm also very lucky to witness probably the best moment for demoscene when quantity evolved into quality - sceners matured, got experienced, many of them evolved into professionals in respective arts and that can be felt in their scene releases as well. I know some people miss golden 80s, 90s, boring scrolls, ugly logos and music from Future Composer but that's definitely not for me. I'm the happiest guy around getting stuck in demoscene right here and right now.

Have you got any music theory background or you just compose by experience?

Oh, hell no! :D Absolutely no theory, no school. All is self taught. I'm still learning things about composition, arrangement and production by myself - slowly, at my pace, but steadily. One thing I regret a bit is that I haven't mastered any live instrument at all. But if it was anything, I'd aim for drums, most probably - tried it twice and it was nice experience. And I'm quite good at beatbox, well, sort of ;)

Are you active in the scene of any other platform?

I had a brief affair with PC demoscene in 2005, being invited by ALLien Senses group which is nowadays inactive, as of my knowledge. Apart from that, quite an avid Impulse Tracker guy in 2001/2002, partially connected with another love which is Unreal/Unreal Tournament and first Unreal Engine from 1998. There's still quite dedicated yet not very numerous scene around those titles and custom maps for them. You can find my old IT modules at <http://modules.pl> run by AceMan. Some of them are really cringe worthy but still a piece of my own history, I guess ;) Besides, I'd gladly try composing for another chips like POKEY or 2600's TIA in my spare time.

Which is your favorite chip to work with? 6581 or 8580?

Definitely 8580 which is more flexible in my opinion, not to mention it allows me to use far more tricks - all trademark sounds from my trickbag are definitely 8580 oriented ;) Of course I love that dirty and acid quality of 6581 - it's irreplaceable for some goals and I know that guys like Soren (former Jeff) can totally rape it (and even squeeze a bit of bass out of those farts, lol :D).

Speaking of SID, what can you say about its emulation? I am referring to SwinSID and SwinSID Nano. Are they going to evolve any further? Have you ever used or maybe still use them nowadays? Do you think one day we will all witness**a perfect 1:1 SID replacement?**

My experience with SwinSID and knowledge about this chip is very limited. I was listening to it mainly during some presentation at Silesia Party. With all my respect to the author, it sounded really crappy to my taste, unless the guy wanted to do something alternative to SID, instead of nailing faithful emulation. Examples from his website weren't much better. Not a fan, unfortunately - I'd opt for HardSID, if I was to choose from. On the other hand, SID emulation in general became really satisfying - those days when Goat Tracker project, SidPlay and output from real SID were nothing alike are luckily gone and I usually know what to expect when I get into the depths of soundchip. Total 1:1 accuracy is not that vital imho - mind that what we hear is also very much related to connected output speakers, so not everyone recalls C64 sounds alike ;)

What is your preferable trackers? Real hardware, emulator, or both?

I'm definitely so called emu-lamer :D My weapon of choice for SIDs is entirely cross-platform Goat Tracker, I check the compilation with SidPlay 2.6 while my poor old C64 collects all dust in cupboard but I occasionally have luck to hear my outcomes on real hardware. Oh well, life... For regular job I use FL Studio / Adobe Audition which are not really trackers. And, besides, I used to compose with Impulse Tracker which was

mentioned before.

Could you present us with a picture of your studio or your equipment? Show us some magic please!

Well, current state of my room doesn't allow me to present any photos - believe me, you'll be grateful that I've spared you this awful view :D In general, my studio equipment serves as SID output as well. As I'm helping myself with emulation, I rely on pc interface which is E-MU 0404 USB - old but reliable, together with pair of killing KRK VXT8 which are far too big for my place. Doing SIDs with professional monitors really pays off and Linus will agree with me about that for sure ;)

“ I might say I came across scene in the right period (2001/2002), which strangely enough coincided with me turning adult, not to mention I didn't have to feel ashamed of my attempts anymore. ”

Can you describe a typical day in your studio?

Well, I either work or waste my time - preferably the latter :D I assume you're not really interested in my regular job so question is about SID composing. I'm almost entirely about improvising what can be heard in tunes (unfortunately) - one of those guys who hate planning things, setting them

up and having no foggiest idea what's going to happen tomorrow or in 5 minutes, including my own activities. Usually it's about some impulse, surge of idea and I instantly try to verbalize it via most appropriate medium, including SID naturally. I'm really quick about ideas, introduce them lightning fast in Goat Tracker, then I usually lose interest, get tired and abandon majority of projects. Still, some of my WIPs are lucky enough to be dug out again and even completed! That would sum it all up.

I have been a fan of "Samar Productions" for a quite long time. Ramos was more than a friend to me. You are a member since 2002. How did you join the group?

Well, no surprise - Ramos invited me! I've been already releasing first tunes under MultiStyle Labs label and there was a Polish website gathering C64 users and scene at that time, managed by Bzyk/Samar. It was already easier back then to spot new sceners

and Ramos simply found me. I still miss the guy, he was kind of unique.

Speaking of "Samar Productions", a great release came to my mind: the terrific "Dream Travel, 100%" demo released back in 2012. Could you please tell us two words about it? How long did it take to completed?

Oh man, I don't remember how long it took to complete the whole prod. I know that I did whole soundtrack for 90% version and later got snowed under other assignments so I had completely no time for 100%. Randall took care of my tune and remade it for new timing. I wasn't quite happy with the result and harm done to some moments, but on the other hand totally loved his new music for the second half of the demo. Besides, people liked it in general so it's absolutely cool. About the very demo - Skull was really persistent to put long and boring fractal part in the very middle of production which was strongly objected by me and Isildur. He got bashed for this by some sceners so I assume lesson was taken :) Nonetheless, prod is really captivating, stylish and full of interesting ideas - that I might say. Has anybody told you before I'm a nitpicking motherfucker? :D

"Samar Productions" has also released "SID Dualux" and recently "New Horizons" which are stereo SID and 3SID music collections. I personally find the idea very innovative and both compilations a real pleasure to listen to, a nice

treat for our ears! Seems that Samar supports multiple SID hardware. Are you an X-SID format fan? Are you going to support 2SID or 3SID as well?

I really love what can be done with multiple chips and I support this idea. I totally loved Conrad's effort and what he can produce with 2xSID config. It's a pity that he got tired of scene life; I'd sell my kidney for his new tracks. I've already done couple of 2SIDs myself and it was really cool experience. 3SID is a bit more problematic due to the lack of GT's native support for that number of chips, however, I've already tried to glue compiled stereo and mono SIDs together - it can be done, but not in a very tasteful manner. There's Hermit's SIDWizard around that allows you to jump straight away into 3xSID and enjoy all its glory. I might definitely try it one day.

You were the organizer of : "Je suis #Drax" and "Je suis #Linus music compos". How did it all start?

I love to imitate styles in general and it's a really great way to have more insight into SID, other guy's workshop and to show off a bit by the way (disgusting, I know ;)) At certain point I started to think that maybe more guys love the same and tried with such compo as a nice experiment. First installment was moderate success and I was motivated to do it again. Je suis #Drax edition initially foreshadowed disaster but close to the end of it many cool entries arrived and I could sleep well. Third

Jammer's top 15 tracks based on CSDB rating

1. Amen, Bigbeat Brother! (2015) - 9.9
2. Foregone Destruction (2016) - 9.8
3. Mr Marvellous (2006) - 9.5
4. Floatee (2003) - 9.5
5. Club Style (2004) - 9.4
6. Yet Bigger Beat (2012) - 9.3
7. Hot Mommas (2007) - 9.3
8. Teh Disco (2006) - 9.3
9. Linusz Sucks Hard! (2015) - 9.2
10. 5 A Dub (2016) - 9.1
11. Jaxxer (2015) - 9.1
12. Rocco Siffredi Invades 1541-II (2008) - 9.1
13. Odyssey (2007) - 9.1
14. Even Uneven (2016) - 9.0
15. Drum Fool (2008) - 9.0

edition is to be announced for sure but I won't tell who's next! I hope all participants have as much fun with the idea as I do.

"Caren and Tangled Tentacles" is a fresh adventure game that reminds the golden days of "Lucas Arts" games. You composed the music theme to this game, so could you please tell us two words about its making of?

Ah, Caren is one of the coolest if not the coolest C64 project ever I had a chance to be involved in. I was probably Veto's first choice here, as I'm quite into more elaborate sound design which was needed for sfx. Audio layer was definitely a bit of a challenge in terms of technical implementation. All started with idea of music and sfx playing together, where the last channel of tune can be overridden by required sound effect. Unfortunately, Goat Tracker turned out not very suitable for this so we've come to compromise of no compromises - either we play fully blown music track of fully blown sfx (being technically a subtune of Goat Tracker song) at once. That was the right decision for sure. Style-wise, I've started with something very akin to Day Of The Tentacle soundtrack - name it Alan Silvestri mixed with goofy experiments and happy pizzicatos. I liked the outcome but Enthusi was quite moderate about it and we've established that music is going to follow 80s theme (as the very game does). In the process, I also went for mild 'Alien' ref-

erence as a form of joke and it turned out suitable for tense moments. Final cover of Bach was strictly Enthusi's idea - it was discussed several times but in the end, I stuck to this and it turned out really cool :) I loved this job and, fortunately, it's most probably not yet over.

"C64 demo sceners were the pioneers who lead the whole demo scene in general to the present existence". Do you agree?

Well, I'm tad too young to have better insight and constructive opinion on that matter. I believe Compunet was kind of flywheel for whole movement but I cannot tell anything from my experience. I was merely shitting my diapers at that time, sorry :D

Can you make a prediction about C64 scene's future? Are new sceners joining the ranks of demoscene? Shall we experience more miracles coming out from SID in the near future?

There are still youngbloods (well, part of them not that fresh anymore) appearing every year and often surprising with great quality, so future is not that dim. To name a few - Stinsen, MCH, Wiklund - you wouldn't expect those talented guys 10 years ago, would you? Besides, young mainstream acquired taste for retro and indie form and it's not that long way from there to demoscene. As I've mentioned earlier, demoscene has become more "professional" in terms of quality. Many of sceners

are already over 40 or even 50, part of them developed their professional career upon their scene function - scene graphicicians became successful web artists, for example. And that professional touch has bled back into the scene world again - you might witness how much design changed thanks to that, how timing changed, how much graphicicians can squeeze out of standard modes or how much things coders can fit into 50Hz effect. Surely, crossplatform tools really facilitated the whole process of raising overall build quality. About SID miracles - THCM is for sure one of the keywords here. For over twenty years, C64 used to be about crappy, noisy and distorted samples - people despised sample compos during events and nobody really wanted it apart from few avid sample fans. And suddenly, it changed. Yeah, expect some miracles, definitely ;)

Can you give us some heads-up of your future releases?

MultiStyle Labs is definitely up to something - I won't spoil it for now. EXclusive ON is planning more productions as well. I'm not that familiar with nearest plans for Samar releases though. Speaking of my personal projects - I have hundreds of WIPs on my drives and dropbox - I guess they're awaiting better times as usual. Some of them should definitely be finished at some point.

Thanks for your time!

My pleasure, thank you very much!



REVIEW

KUNG-FU MANIACS TRILOGY

Review: Minimoog; Translated by Karo

"King Bruce Lee, the Master of Karate" – this was once sung in a distinguished, low voice by Piotr Fronczewski, under a pseudonym of "Franek Kimono". Isn't the topic of karate/ninja/kung-fu/China played out? As it turns out – not at all!

Waaah! The mean boys from Blapsville stole my toy robot! – this sentence motivates our main character to fight with

ubiquitous evil. The Master of Awesome, who we impersonate, has to confront Chinese thugs to get back a little boy's stolen toy (the boy's name, by

tacks from everywhere, so slow reactions will lead to quick demise. Considering the fact that the game was made in SEUCK, there are times when not everything works as fast as we would like it to – therefore these slow reactions can be quite numerable.

The game has really nice graphics. Travelling through different levels of the city looks very appealing, the sprites are simple but clear. It's one of characteristics of Alf Yngve's productions – clear simplicity, which makes everything look proportionate and solid, nothing is mixed up. It's a huge plus of this difficult game.

During the game we can hear a very suitable, good music. It's a standard thing in Yngve's games because he is often assisted – also here – by Richard Bayliss.

A considerable innovation differentiating "Kung-Fu Maniacs" from other SEUCK productions is the variability of weapons. Gathering a certain amount of points gives us the possibility to use long-range weapons – an energy ball for instance (at least it sort of looks like that). Before that we can only use kicks and punches and they

the way, sounds quite Polish – Podznofsky). The fight takes place in a town densely populated by ninja warriors – Blapsville – and the quest into its very core may prove difficult for even the Master of Awesome.

Alf Yngve, known for his SEUCK creations, creates this particular story in his game "Kung-Fu Maniacs". Made in Sideways SEUCK, it guarantees some quite difficult fun. As it usually is with this type of productions, it's easier to lose a life here than to get it. The Master of Awesome is exposed to at-



are both inefficient and quite risky.

The game has a funny ending but unfortunately, it can be seen by the chosen ones. Should I tell you how it looks? To tell, or not to tell, that is the question... Alright, I am going to tell you! The game ends with a lofty speech made by

“**Travelling through different levels of the city looks very appealing, the sprites are simple but clear. It's one of characteristics of Alf Yngve's productions – clear simplicity, nothing is mixed up.**

the Master of Awesome, who tell us about the necessity of peace-making, avoiding resolving conflicts with force, etc, etc, some political blabber, which as usual does not reflect reality. The listeners know this all because as we get to see, very meaningful "z z z" quickly appears on the screen and the orator is then smashed by a huge "The End".

The author predicted that after around 5th time we beat "1.000 Kung-Fu Maniacs", we might get a bit bored, so on two disks there is not only the main game but a few mini games. We already know one of them from SEUCK Compo 2015 – "Snatch McBlagger", in which a likable robber with a moustache breaks out of prison. Apart from that there is a classic, very nicely done military shoot'em up, called "Flying Cobra". Made in an eastern style theme, there is

another addition – "Nervana" – which unfortunately doesn't really work well; the computer gets overloaded and as a result we can neither move nor shoot and therefore – we die all the time.

Because the game I am reviewing is called "Kung-Fu Maniacs Trilogy", I suppose we will need more than one part of it... And the author also didn't overlook that matter – on

the second disk there is the second part of the game. This time it's even more difficult and has a different, closer camera – the sprites are not so small. The enemies shoot at us so fiercely and our punches are so imprecise, that we end up without any lives much quicker than in the first part. Nevertheless, the very neat and solid looks of the game are worth a praise.

I won't say anything more but I definitely will encourage you to play "Kung-Fu Maniacs Trilogy" and to check if everything

that I wrote here is true. So, may the Force be with you! Ooops... wrong franchise...



KUNG-FU MANIACS TRILOGY

Publisher: **Psytronik**
Year of publication: **2015**
Platform: **C64**

8 10 5



JOHNNY PRESENTS

The cover artwork of this issue was already sketched back in 2014. I was involved into multiple drawings of Polish historical figures: Józef Piłsudski, Witold Pilecki, Wincenty Witos... I also painted Mieszko I of Poland, historical ruler of the Polans, but didn't have any major plans of using it. The problem was, that there were obviously no cameras back then in X century and there aren't that many paintings either. The most known portrait is printed on the 10 PLN banknote, but there is also Jan Matejko's painting which was used by me as a pattern. I can't compare myself to this great artist, but I still hope that my work is decent.

Two years have passed. On Friday evening Komek called me and asked for another image to be included on the cover page. He also added that this time we're looking for a historical figure. I opened up my images folder, found this portrait and added the corresponding background, as I didn't want it to just be pure black and white image. I think it now obtained a patriotic voice! I'm happy that my work was used in the magazine and it just proofs that historical figures were always be alive.

Jan Lorek

